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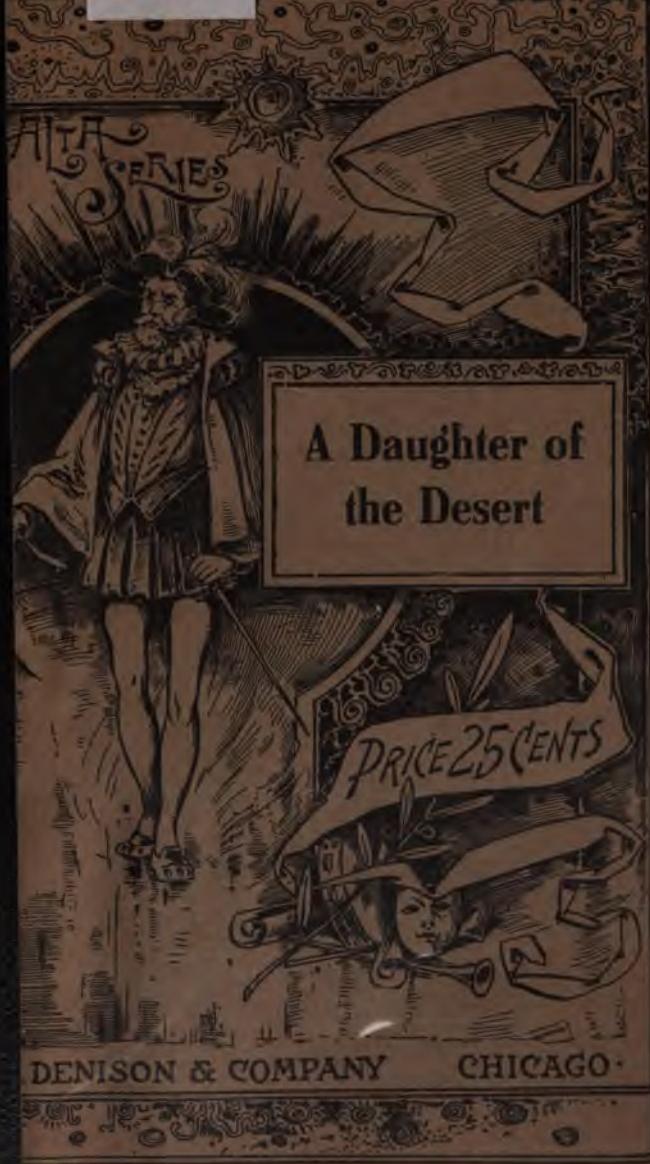
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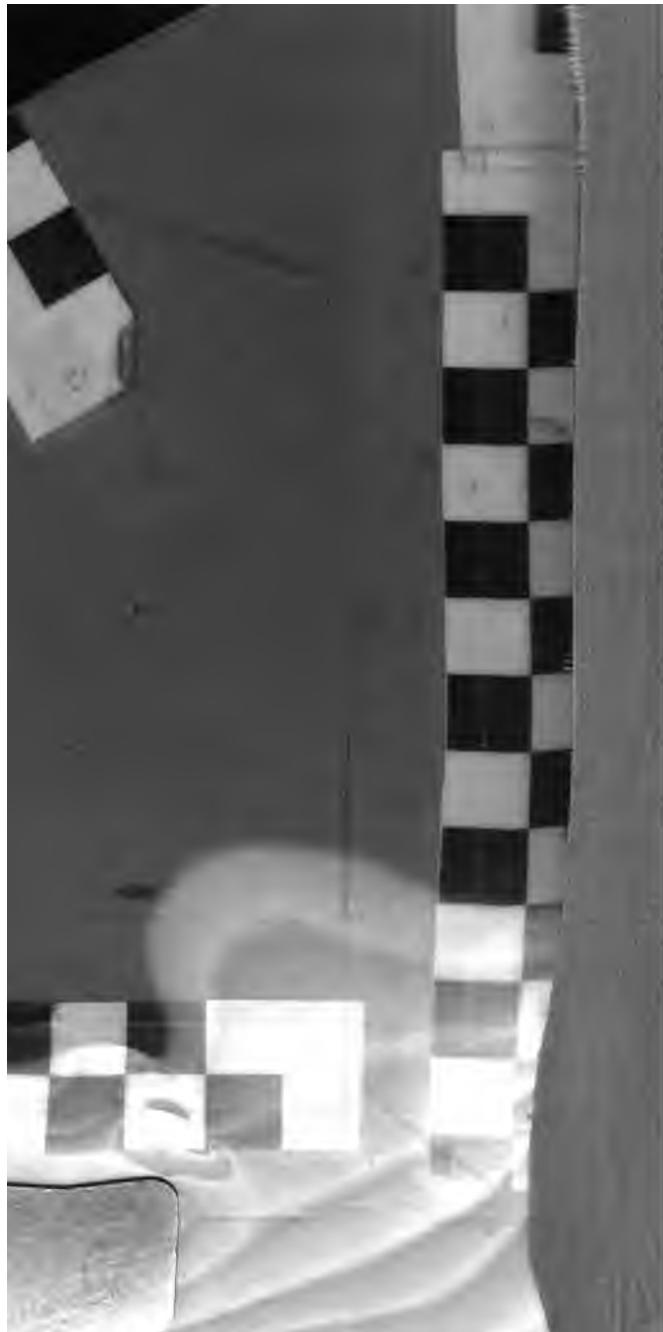
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T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago

A DAUGHTER OF THE DESERT

A COMEDY DRAMA OF THE ARIZONA
PLAINS IN FOUR ACTS

BY
CHARLES ULRICH

AUTHOR OF

"*The Honor of a Cowboy*," "*The Man From Nevada*," "*On the Little Big Horn*," "*The Deserter*," "*A Celestial Maiden*," "*Nell Gwyn of London Town*," "*Dolly Madison*," "*Robespierre*," "*In Virginia*," "*A California Girl*," "*Mistress Harcourt*," Etc.



CHICAGO
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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L47 D3

A DAUGHTER OF THE DESERT

CHARACTERS.

HAROLD MORTON.....*A Railroad Surveyor*
CLARENCE OGDEN.....*An Arizona Rancher*
SAMUEL HOPKINS.....*A Land Speculator*
PEDRO SILVERA.....*A Mexican Renegade*
JIM PARKER.....*A Gambler who is on the Square*
BILL JONES.....*A Sure-Fire Sheriff*
RUTH ARLINGTON.....*A Daughter of the Desert*
LUCY HOPKINS.....*Her College Chum*
MRS. MARY OGDEN.....*An Arizona Widow*
WHITE BIRD.....*An Apache Indian Girl*
COWBOYS, ETC.

PLACE—*Arizona.*

TIME—1882.

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Two Hours and Fifteen Minutes.*

ACT I—Interior of Arlington Ranch House.....
The Accusation
ACT II—Same as Act I.....
The Arrest
ACT III—Hotel at Tombstone.....
The Rescue
ACT IV—Same as Acts I and II.....
The Reckoning

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SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAM.

ACT I—Clarence and Lucy have an adventure. “How dare you kiss a helpless girl, sir?” Return of Ruth. The story of her secret. “I must avenge the murder of my father!” Silvera’s charge. “Your father was killed by Charles Morton!” Morton confesses he is the son of the accused. The avowal of love. Hopkins dotes on custard pie. News of the Apache outbreak. Morton goes to the rescue of his men. “If I die clear my dead father’s name.”

ACT II—Lucy in tears. “It’s not my stomach, but my heart, papa.” White Bird brings news of the victory over the Indians. Clarence wounded. The return. Silvera has warrant for Morton’s arrest on a charge of robbery. Story of the fight. At breakfast. A toast to Lucy and Clarence’s betrothal. Flapjacks and custard pie. Ruth defends the poor Indian. The arrest of Morton. White Bird’s avowal. “We shall bring the guilty to justice!”

ACT III—Jim Parker, a gambler “who is on the square,” introduces himself. How Silvera got a scar on the back of his hand. “I put it there with my sticker!” Silvera recognizes Parker. The threat. “If you monkey with me or my friends, I’ll slice, not yer hand, but yer liver!” The plot to rescue Morton. He refuses to make his escape. “I am a man of honor and my word is my bond.” Morton’s innocence established by Parker. A missing witness. “We must carry him to the Mexican line, if we would hope to save him!” The rescue of Morton by cowboys. Ruth has the upper hand. “Now off to the Mexican line and ride like h-e-l-1!”

ACT IV—Mrs. Ogden and Lucy discuss the effect of pie upon men. “My husband ate two lemon pies and died!” Death due to indigestion, not the pies. Hopkins makes love to Mrs. Ogden. “Your pies have gone through my stomach and captured my heart!” Arrival of Ruth and Morton. White Bird clears up the mystery of the identity of the slayer of Ruth’s father. “Silvera shot him in back.” Silvera returns on a mission of revenge. “I will kill your lover at your feet.” Jones and Parker take a hand in the game.

Silvera cornered and shot. Ruth the richest girl in Arizona. Everybody happy.

STORY OF THE PLAY.

The scenes of the play are located in Arizona at the time of the Apache Indian raids in 1882. Six years previously Mr. Arlington, father to Ruth, had been mysteriously assassinated, and her mother dying from grief a few weeks later, Ruth swears vengeance upon her father's murderer, of whose identity, however, she is ignorant.

Three months prior to the opening scene, Ruth had met and loved Harold Morton, a railroad surveyor. Pedro Silvera, a Mexican of polish though a ruffian, seeks to win Ruth's love, and finding she treats his avowals with disdain, he resolves to ruin Morton in her eyes by charging that Morton's father slew her own. Although her love for Morton by reason of this charge is shaken when he admits that he is the son of the accused man, she resolves to hold her decision in abeyance until Morton is given an opportunity of clearing his dead father's name of the stigma cast upon it. Meanwhile news of the Apache raid is received at the ranch house and Morton leaves Ruth to go to the rescue of his imperiled surveying crew.

In Morton's absence, Silvera secures a warrant for Morton's arrest on a trumped up charge of highway robbery. This warrant is served by Bill Jones, a sheriff, on Morton's return from his battle with the Apaches. He denies his guilt and Ruth is prostrated at the calamity that has befallen her until she learns from White Bird, an Indian girl, that Silvera's sole purpose in causing Morton's arrest was to secure revenge upon him for purposes of his own.

Ruth follows Morton to Tombstone and after vainly seeking to have him make his escape, she plots with Clarence, and Jim Parker, a gambler, to have Morton rushed across the Mexican border by a crowd of cowboys. This is done, and after Morton is freed from the necessity of going to trial without witnesses, Parker and Ruth hunt up the only man who is able to prove an alibi for Morton.

Upon his affidavit the charge against Morton is dismissed and he returns to Arizona.

Baffled, Silvera pursues Morton to the Arlington ranch and kills Black Panther, the only eye witness to the murder of Ruth's father. Panther before death confesses to White Bird that Silvera killed Mr. Arlington, thus clearing the name of Morton's father. Silvera appears before Ruth and Lucy and threatens them with death. He admits he has come to kill Morton, but the premature arrival of the sheriff balks his purpose and Silvera is slain while running away. He confesses to the crime of murdering Arlington and gives up a deed to mining property which makes Ruth the richest girl in Arizona. The turbulent course of Ruth and Morton's love thus is changed to serenity and happiness ensues.

The comedy element is supplied by Clarence and Lucy, who love each other, and by Hopkins, whose fondness for Mrs. Ogden's custard pies bring him to a realization that his happiness lies in forming a life's partnership with the widow.

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

MORTON—Young, handsome, dashing, brave. He wears a conventional western costume throughout the action of the play. This consists of a broad brimmed white hat, blue shirt, flowing tie, black trousers tucked in his boots, a belt and revolver. He must be quiet in his emotional scenes to be effective.

OGDEN—A young, good-natured rancher, full of life and laughter. He uses the ordinary cowboy costume, broad brimmed hat, blue shirt, flowing tie, chaps, cartridge belt and revolver. He wears top boots, spurs, etc.

HOPKINS—An elderly man, gray wig, smooth face, rotund of person if possible, good natured, jolly and fond of a joke. He has an inordinate love for custard pie, which to him is above all else in life. He is dressed like a city man, in gray or brown sack suit.

SILVERA—A man of about thirty years. He is suave, polished and shows that he has been well educated, and

speaks English fluently but with a pronounced accent. He wears the costume of a Mexican of high degree, with tall sombrero, Spanish coat and trousers, with red sash, etc. He is the heavy and must be played with quiet force, especially in the heavier scenes.

PARKER—A middle-aged man, a gambler, quiet of manner, though exhibiting all the qualities of a man to be feared when aroused. He is from the South and speaks with a southern accent at all times. He talks with a drawl and is of easy manner. He wears a Prince Albert suit, with tall collar, flowing tie, considerable jewelry and a low wide brimmed black hat which he carries rakishly on one side. He smokes cigars incessantly and must be played with a view to showing him to be a man of honor although he is a professional gambler.

JONES—An elderly, typical frontier Sheriff, full of grit and recklessness. He wears a mixed costume and carries belt and revolver. He should be played so as to supply light comedy.

RUTH—A highstrung, brave, lively western girl, full of the charm of the West. She shows emotion and gayety by turns and must be capable of meeting every emergency with dignity and force of character. She wears the customary cowgirl costume, with broad white hat, ribbon band, white waist, blue or black skirt, belt and revolver and buff leggings and shoes.

LUCY—A young, fresh looking ingenue. She wears the ordinary street dress, white waist, with skirt to suit taste and black shoes.

MRS. OGDEN—An elderly woman, though well preserved, jolly, good natured, but showing she has a temper when aroused. She wears an ordinary house gown throughout the entire play and this may be changed in every act to suit the person playing it. At least two changes of gowns should be made.

WHITE BIRD—A typical Indian girl, young and handsome. She carries herself with dignity and pride. She wears a gaudily decorated blouse and skirt, with glaring colored

shawl, beads about throat, and black wig with a single feather.

PROPERTY LIST.

Act I—Table, three chairs, easy chair, lamp, several books, papers and magazines. Revolvers for Ruth, Morton, Clarence, small toy pistol for Hopkins. Knife for Silvera. Indian arrow for Morton. Curtain for window. Two rugs for floor. Several Indian baskets, pictures, etc., to hang to walls of scene. Dishes, glasses, wine bottles, silverware, etc., for sideboard. Plain sideboard. Cups and stone for hoof-beats.

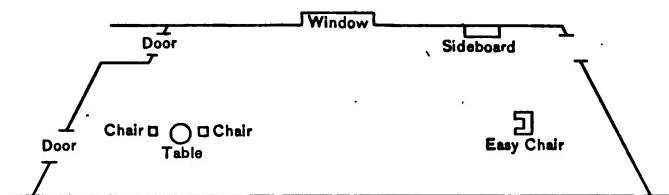
Act II—A plate of pancakes, several sandwiches, wine, coffee, etc., for breakfast scene. Other props as named in Act I.

Act III—Round table with three chairs, pigeon-hole case, a bundle of letters, cards, papers, etc. Make several signs, thus: "Bar. Hot and Cold Drinks." "Prayer Meeting at the Big Tent Every Sunday." "We Trust in God, but No One Else," etc. Several revolvers for cowboys. Knife for Parker.

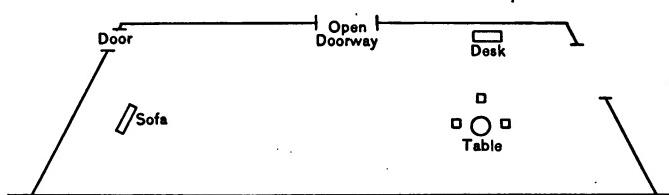
Act IV—Same props as in Acts I and II. Document for Jones. Field glass for Hopkins. Revolver for Silvera.

STAGE SETTINGS.

ACTS I, II AND IV.



ACT III.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *R. D.*, right door; *L. D.*, left door, etc.; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat, or scene running across the back of the stage; *1 G.*, first groove, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

A DAUGHTER OF THE DESERT

ACT I.

SCENE: Living room in the Arlington ranch house, Arizona, in 4, boxed. General effect should be of cozy comfort, plain, but substantial. Practical doors R. 2 E., R. U. E. and L. U. E. Curtained window C. in flat, through which a landscape view may be had, and persons passing it in back may be seen. Round table with two chairs R. 2 E. Lamp, books, papers, etc., on table. Plain sideboard to L. of window, upon which are glasses, dishes, silverware, etc. Walls may be beautified with pictures, weapons, Indian baskets according to taste. Large easy chair L. C. Carpet on floor. Scene is well lighted at rise, it being afternoon. Just before rise, several male voices in song accompanied by a banjo or guitar is heard. See Scene Plot for stage setting.

At rise enter MRS. OGDEN, L. U. E. She crosses to window C. in F. and after listening a moment, looks off R.

MRS. OGDEN. Skylarking again when the chores ought to be done. Those cowboys will yet be the death of me and ruin Ruth Arlington. (*Goes to R. U. E. and opening door, calls off loudly.*) Stop that op'ry out there, boys. I guess you know what that means.

COWBOYS (*laughingly*). All right, Mrs. Ogden. We cave in. (*Song gradually dies away.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*returning to window C.*). It's time Clarence and Lucy were returning from their ride on the range.

Ever since Geronimo got on a high horse, there's no telling what the Apaches may do. (*Hoofbeats heard off R. U. E. She looks off R., shading her eyes.*) It is Clarence at last, thank heaven! (*After a pause during which hoofbeats grow louder, she goes to R. U. E.*)

CLARENCE (*off stage R. U. E.*). Whoa, Bill!

MRS. OGDEN (*loudly calls off*). Come right in, children. Mind you brush the alkali off your clothes.

CLARENCE (*off stage R. U. E.*). All right, mother. Come along, Lucy.

Enter CLARENCE and LUCY R. U. E. CLARENCE goes to MRS. OGDEN while LUCY turns down stage R. to table.

MRS. OGDEN (*up C., to CLARENCE*). Got back safely, Clarence.

CLARENCE (*kissing MRS. OGDEN*). Of course, mother. You didn't fancy we'd get back in fragments, did you?

MRS. OGDEN. Did you have any adventures on the range?

CLARENCE (*turning laughingly to LUCY at table*). Yes, a fearful adventure. Ugh! Ask Lucy to tell you about it. I shudder so much at the thought of it, that I become speechless. (*Shivers.*)

LUCY (*annoyed*). It was nothing, Mrs. Ogden. Clarence is an incorrigible trifler.

MRS. OGDEN (*goes C. and looks at one, then the other, perplexed*) What happened to you? Did you meet Apaches?

CLARENCE (*at L. C.*). Far worse, mother. Guess again. (*Sits in easy chair.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*desperately*). In heaven's name, what happened?

LUCY (*at R. of table, shyly*). Well, it was this way, Mrs. Ogden. You see, Clarence—Clarence—(*hesitates*).

MRS. OGDEN (*looking reprovingly at CLARENCE L. C.*) Well, Clarence doubtless has much to answer for. What has he done now?

LUCY (*with an effort*). He proposed to me.

MRS. OGDEN (*surprised*). Is that so? (*Turns to CLARENCE severely.*) How dare you propose to any girl without consulting me, sir?

CLARENCE (*rising and crossing to table R. C.*). It was a risky thing to do, mother, but we boys have a habit of taking the bit in our teeth and going it tooth and nail. That's what Lucy's horse did.

MRS. OGDEN. What does this gibberish mean, Clarence?

CLARENCE. You see, mother, just as I had told Lucy—

LUCY (*interrupting him reprovingly*). Clarence!

CLARENCE (*laughingly*). Of course, Lucy. Just as I whispered to her that she was the dearest and sweetest girl in the world, her horse shied at a cactus and ran away at a mile a minute gait.

MRS. OGDEN. I don't see anything marvelous about that.

LUCY (*amazed*). To be on a runaway horse no adventure? I think it is dreadful. I nearly fainted.

CLARENCE. I chased Lucy for two miles and caught her just as she was falling from the beast. And then—(*hesitates as he looks at Lucy*).

LUCY (*bravely*). He kissed me several times.

MRS. OGDEN (*in mock horror*). The miserable wretch to take so unfair an advantage of a defenceless girl. (*To CLARENCE*.) How dared you do it, sir?

CLARENCE (*humblly*). I suppose I ought to be shot, but I'd do it again if I knew I had to hang for it.

MRS. OGDEN. I don't object to your kissing a girl after you had won her consent, but to kiss a helpless girl—

LUCY (*interrupting*). But I wasn't helpless, Mrs. Ogden.

CLARENCE (*laughingly*). No, Lucy wasn't altogether unconscious, for I heard her say, "How delicious."

LUCY (*horrified*). Oh, Clarence,, how shockingly you talk.

MRS. OGDEN. He deserves a thrashing, Lucy. I promise you he shall never kiss you again.

CLARENCE. Well, I like that!

LUCY. You deserve it for telling tales out of school.

(*Hoofbeats heard off R. U. E. MRS. OGDEN goes to window C. and looks off. LUCY and CLARENCE at table.*)

MRS. OGDEN. It's Mr. Morton and Mr. Hopkins.

LUCY (*starts*). Papa coming? I dare not face him now.
(*Goes to R. 2 E.*)

CLARENCE (*following LUCY to R. 2 E.*). Shall I tell
papa, Lucy?

LUCY. If you speak before I say the word, I'll disown
you forever. (*Exit R. 2 E. laughingly.*)

CLARENCE (*aside as he turns up R.*). Well, I'll be jig-
gered! Who'd ever think love makes a girl so scary?

MRS. OGDEN (*seriously to CLARENCE up R.*). My boy,
look me in the eye honestly. (*Takes him by shoulders and
faces him.*) So. Tell me, do you love Lucy? No trifling
now, mind.

CLARENCE. I love her with all my heart, mother.

MRS. OGDEN. And Lucy?

CLARENCE. I think she loves me too. She's hinted it.

MRS. OGDEN. Then win her and God bless you. I think
her one of the sweetest girls in the world.

CLARENCE (*taking her hand*). Mother, I'll win her if
there's any virtue in constancy of purpose and Arizona grit.

Enter MORTON, followed by HOPKINS, R. U. E. They
salute others and CLARENCE goes to L. C. while MRS.
OGDEN goes to table.

HOPKINS (*at R. C., to MORTON*). I wouldn't worry
about Ruth, my boy. She's romping on the mesa with Lucy,
probably.

MRS. OGDEN. She rode over to the Jenkinses two hours
ago to see the sick baby.

MORTON (*at L. C., thoughtfully*). Jenkinses, eh. That's
seven miles north. Unless she was unreasonably detained,
she ought to have returned by this time.

HOPKINS (*crossing to L. C. and sitting in easy chair*).
But you do not know the girl, Morton. When she is astride
her pony, she recalls the adage that time was made for
slaves and not for the free girls of the Arizona desert.

MORTON (*going to window C.*). I grant you all that,
Mr. Hopkins, but now that there are rumors of an Apache
uprising, we cannot be too careful, you know.

CLARENCE (*down L.*). Ruth has nothing to fear from

the Apaches, since she was adopted as a daughter of the tribe by Geronimo himself.

MORTON (*laughs and comes down R.*). That reassures me somewhat, but there is also an old saying, put not your faith in princes. I know enough of the Apache nature to be assured that the maxim applies to them with significant force. (*Hoofbeats off R. U. E.* MORTON *goes to window hurriedly and looks off R.*) It is she—Ruth.

MRS. OGDEN (*to CLARENCE*). See to it, Clarence, the boys do not neglect their chores. (*Goes to L. U. E.*)

CLARENCE. All right, mother. They wont loaf when I'm bossing the job. (*Looks off R. U. E. with start.*) Well, I'm jiggered if there isn't that Mexican, Silvera, again.

MORTON (*starts and goes to R. U. E., looks off*). What does he want here?

CLARENCE. Come to see Ruth again, most likely.

MORTON. To see Ruth? What do you mean?

CLARENCE. This is the third time within two weeks he has come. He held two secret conferences with Ruth.

MORTON (*thoughtfully*). Conferences, eh?

HOPKINS (*rising from chair L. C. and going to R. U. E.*). Look to your laurels, Morton.

MORTON. Nonsense.

HOPKINS. Silvera is a Mexican of high degree and as rich as the devil, they tell me. These sort of fellows with their dark skin and eyes make dangerous rivals, my boy.

CLARENCE. He's a crook and I'd like to poison him (*Exit R. U. E.*)

MORTON. Clarence is right—the man is a scoundrel. His face, even in the absence of more convincing proofs, attests it.

MRS. OGDEN (*as she works about sideboard L. of C. in F.*). I think he is a villain and if I had my way, he'd never put his foot under this roof again.

HOPKINS (*turning to Mrs. OGDEN at sideboard*). Precisely my idea, Mrs. Ogden. (*Aside to her in low voice.*) Mrs. Ogden, please.

MRS. OGDEN (*surprised*). Mr. Hopkins—

HOPKINS. Supper almost ready?

MRS. OGDEN. Yes, sir.

HOPKINS. Excuse me, but are we to have another of those delicious custard pies of yours?

MRS. OGDEN (*shows pleasure*). Yes, sir. Do you like my pies?

HOPKINS. Like your pies, Mrs. Ogden? Why, if you and I were cast upon a desert island and had the means of making custard pies and my rescue entailed the loss of your pies, I'd stick to the island, the pies and you forever!

MRS. OGDEN (*highly pleased*). Oh, Mr. Hopkins, you are a flatterer.

HOPKINS. Now run along and don't delay the supper. Above all, don't forget that *custard pie*. (*Shoves Mrs. Ogden to L. U. E.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*laughingly*). I wont, Mr. Hopkins. (*Smiles significantly at him, then exits L. U. E.*)

MORTON (*to Hopkins*). For the life of me I can't imagine what this greaser wants of Miss Arlington.

HOPKINS (*as he goes down to table R. C.*). That's a mystery which Ruth alone may explain.

(*Hoofbeats off R. U. E. become louder. Cheers heard.*)

MORTON. I fancy I have seen the fellow somewhere. Of one thing, I am sure. It is that Miss Arlington is not safe in his company.

HOPKINS. She's as brave as she is magnificent, my boy. If I were twenty years younger—

MORTON (*interrupting laughingly*). You would be less in evidence in affaires de coeur that do not concern you, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS (*laughing gleefully*). Ho, ho, ho! You're jealous of me.

MORTON (*slapping Hopkins on back*). Jealous of a weather beaten old shadow of a man like you? My dear friend, I have not the right to be jealous of any man as far as Miss Arlington is concerned, and if I had, an ancient bear like you never could inspire that sentiment in my heart.

HOPKINS. I, a bear? I, the mildest tempered man in Arizona. Gee whiz, if love makes me see and talk like

that, may heaven protect me from Cupid and his shafts.
(*Turns up stage C.*)

Enter RUTH and WHITE BIRD R. U. E. MORTON and HOPKINS advance to greet them.

RUTH (*smilingly to HOPKINS*). Good evening, Mr. Hopkins. And you, Mr. Morton. (*Goes down to table R. C.*)

MORTON (*going C.*). Good evening, Miss Arlington. Did you have a pleasant ride?

HOPKINS (*glancing significantly at MORTON*). Morton was terribly worried about you.

RUTH (*surprised*). Worried about me? Why?

MORTON. There is a reported outbreak of Apaches at Willow Springs.

RUTH (*thoughtfully*). That is indeed serious, Mr. Morton. But conceding the report were well based, how could that possibly endanger us here, five miles from the fort?

MORTON. Geronimo is a wily Indian and if what I hear be true, the country within a radius of a hundred miles is in danger of a visitation of the fiends who cluster about his wigwam.

RUTH. Let us see if this report can be verified. (*Calls.*) White Bird!

WHITE BIRD (*coming down C. and stopping near table*). You wante me, Missee Arlington?

RUTH (*at R. of table*). Is it true that your people by command of Geronimo again have gone on the war path?

WHITE BIRD (*shaking her head in negative*). I no hear. Black Panther know, maybe.

RUTH. Ask him.

WHITE BIRD (*going to R. U. E. and speaking to someone off stage in a supposed Indian dialect for a few seconds, returns to table*).
RUTH. Why does Panther not come in, White Bird?

WHITE BIRD. Him say him bring bad luck to you if come in—spoil carpet maybe.

RUTH (*laughingly*). What does he say about Geronimo?

WHITE BIRD. Him say don't know for sure. May be so, 'cause Geronimo mad at cowboys for stealing him mustangs.

RUTH. Tell Panther he must find out at once and report to me. We must know the truth before the night passes.

WHITE BIRD. Good. (*She goes to R. U. E. and whispers to man off stage and immediately sound of hoofbeats are heard, the sound gradually dying away. She then stands up stage looking out of window.*)

RUTH (*looking about*). Where is Lucy?

Enter LUCY R. 2 E. RUTH turns and they greet each other.

LUCY (*kissing Ruth*). How is Mrs. Jenkins' baby, Ruth?

RUTH. In a serious condition, I fear. It has measles.

HOPKINS (*laughingly*). Measles serious? Bah. Look at me. I've had measles three times. It made a man of me.

LUCY. You musn't mind papa, Ruth. He's harmless. Oh, I forgot. I saw Silvera riding up the lane just now.

RUTH (*starts*). Silvera?

LUCY. What does this man want to come here for, Ruth? Clarence says Silvera's a bad man.

RUTH (*disturbed*). That may be true, Lucy, but he knows who slew my father and he is assisting me to secure my revenge.

ALL (*in a voice*). Revenge?

RUTH (*after a pause as she looks at others*). You do not know the complete story of my sorrow. Well, the hour to speak has come. If you will not find my recital tiresome, I shall tell you all.

MORTON. Proceed at your leisure, Miss Arlington. We are all attention. (*Stands to R. of RUTH at table R. C.*)

RUTH (*sits at table R. HOPKINS sits L. at table. LUCY stands near RUTH*). It was six years ago when the greatest sorrow I have ever known clouded my life. I was fifteen then, a mere child, and all the wretched details of the ghastly affair linger with frightful vividness in my memory. (*Hides face in her hands.*)

LUCY (*caressing RUTH*). Dear Ruth.

RUTH (*resuming impressively*). I was born beneath this roof and every stone in these walls is hallowed by some sweet memory of my dead father and mother. I grew up a

wild flower and the prospectors, emigrants, cowboys and Indians called me then as they do now, a daughter of the desert. Ah, this was then in truth a desert, arid, bleak and cheerless to all except my parents who fought valiantly to win their fortune in this inhospitable solitude. (*Pauses for a moment, then resumes.*) For years my parents were actually buried alive in this mesa, meeting civilized beings at rare intervals, hourly threatened with death at the hands of savages. My mother taught me all she knew while my father prospected in the mountains in search of gold. Fortune rewarded him, for one day he discovered a gold mine. The news was spread broadcast and within a few weeks the place was alive with fortune seekers of every degree. One day a man, representing a syndicate in the East, came to my father and they had several conferences together. They quarreled over the sale of this mine and separated in anger after my father had executed a deed of sale in which merely a nominal figure was mentioned. The next day my father's body was found not a mile from this spot, shot—shot through the back.

MORTON. Dastardly assassin!

RUTH (*tearfully*). The assassin was not only a murderer, but a robber as well, for the deed to the mine as well as other objects of trifling value in his pockets were stolen.

MORTON (*at C.*). Do you know the name of the man who quarreled with your father, Miss Arlington?

RUTH (*fiercely*). No, for if I did, I should hunt him down and kill him as he did my father.

LUCY (*caressing RUTH*). Don't talk so, Ruth. It is dreadful.

RUTH. What would you have me do, Lucy? Sit like Niobe, all tears, and permit the murder of my father to go unavenged? I have a double crime to avenge, for six weeks after my father was slain, my poor mother died of a broken heart. (*Weeps*).

LUCY. Poor Ruth.

RUTH. When my mother was carried to the tomb, I resolved to go East for a time, not only to forget the tragedy of my life, but to secure an education. I went to St. Louis,

where I attended school and where I met and grew to love you, Lucy. (*Caresses Lucy's hand.*)

LUCY (*in lively fashion*). And where we became chums, Ruth. You musn't tell some things we did, because papa is here, you know.

HOPKINS (*in mock severity*). I suspect you were a mischievous pair of birds.

LUCY. We never played a trick upon an undeserving person, did we, Ruth?

RUTH (*smilingly*). Never, unless the opportunity presented itself.

HOPKINS. Which seldom happened, eh?

RUTH. We lose time. It was I who with my stories of Arizona, induced Lucy to visit me here this summer. Ah, how my aching heart yearned for companionship. Now that you have come, Lucy, I want you with me always. Since you came the arid desert has blossomed in my eyes into a veritable bower of roses, the hot breezes have been tinged with holier freshness, the brassy skies and pitiless sun have become merciful to man and beast, and the treeless buttes no longer strike terror to my heart! This wondrous change your companionship has wrought, Lucy.

LUCY. Unless you will otherwise, I shall never leave you, Ruth.

Enter SILVERA R. U. E. He stands and watches others eagerly.

RUTH. I thank you from my heart, Lucy. Two weeks ago, I met this man, Silvera, who reopened my wound by telling me that he was on the track of the man who killed my father. Now, I dream of naught except revenge—revenge!

MORTON. It is a natural resolve, Miss Arlington. If my humble assistance will benefit your cause, pray command me.

HOPKINS (*striking the table a heavy blow*). Put me down with Morton. If I find this assassin or any of his brood, I'll make mince meat of them!

RUTH. The man who killed my father will be brought to justice, for God's vengeance is inexorable!

SILVERA (*coming down C. jauntily—to RUTH*). You are wrong, Miss Arlington. (*All start.*)

RUTH (*springing up excitedly*). Wrong, Silvera?

SILVERA. The man who shot your father is—is dead.

RUTH (*starts in surprise*). Dead! (*Goes C. feverishly.*) How do you know, Silvera? Speak! Who was he?

SILVERA. He died at Santa Fe two years ago. (*Looks significantly at MORTON.*) His name was—was—Charles Morton.

MORTON (*at R. C.*). My God!

RUTH (*amazed, looks at MORTON and SILVERA alternately*). Morton! What does this mean?

SILVERA. This man Morton had a son—

RUTH (*interrupting as she looks bewildered at MORTON*). A son?

SILVERA (*looking significantly at MORTON*). For whose whereabouts I am now searching. I go to fort in one hour. Must see you alone. (*Aside to RUTH in low voice.*) Alone.

RUTH (*in agony*). Yes, yes. (*Turns C.*)

MORTON (*going to her pleadingly*). Miss Arlington—

RUTH (*interrupts shudderingly*). My father's assassin was named Morton, he had a son, your name is Morton! Oh, God, what suspicion is entering my heart? (*Stands C. with hand to heart, pondering.*)

SILVERA (*to Ruth*). Remember, alone. (*He goes up stage to R. U. E., and when at door laughs disdainfully at MORTON, who follows him threateningly, then exits R. U. E.*)

CLARENCE enters R. U. E. *He stands at door and looks off after SILVERA.*

CLARENCE. I thought I smelled brimstone as I passed that fellow. I'll bet his father is Old Nick himself. (*To MORTON, who is up R.*) What's happened, Morton?

MORTON (*putting on gloves, taking up hat, etc.*). Ask the others. I'm off to my camp. (*Aside to CLARENCE.*) Keep your eye upon Silvera. He's dangerous.

HOPKINS (*rising and going up stage*). I'll see you on your way, Morton, if you don't mind.

MORTON. I'm glad to have your company for a distance, Mr. Hopkins. (*He stands at door for a moment, looks at RUTH, then sighs heavily and exits R. U. E.*)

HOPKINS (*at R. U. E.*). There's some mystery here, and I propose to solve it if I can. (*Exit R. U. E.*)

LUCY (*to RUTH at table*). Come to my room, Ruth, and compose yourself.

RUTH (*sadly*). Anywhere, anywhere, except this place, Lucy. (*They go to R. 2 E.*)

CLARENCE (*sees LUCY and makes signs to her. She sees him and nods her head. She exeunts with Ruth, arm in arm, R. 2 E.—aside as he looks about at C.*) Here's a pretty howdyedo. Everybody quietly vamooses and leaves me alone here with my thoughts. What the deuce has happened here, anyhow?

Enter LUCY, R. 2 E. She comes C. to CLARENCE.

LUCY (*in whisper to CLARENCE*). We had an awful scene here just now.

CLARENCE. Go on! Don't you see I'm aflame with curiosity?

LUCY. Silvera revealed the identity of the assassin of Ruth's father just now, and what name did he utter? Guess, Clarence.

CLARENCE. I'm a bad guesser except at the weight of a steer. What was the name?

LUCY (*in a whisper*). Morton.

CLARENCE (*starts in surprise*). Morton! How the dickens did he find it out? Was this murderer related to Harold Morton?

LUCY. I'm sure I don't know. Silvera said this man had a son. How strange it would be if Harold were his son.

CLARENCE. Not strange, but tragic, Lucy. Aren't you aware he loves Ruth and that she—well, if she doesn't return his passion, then I'm a muttonhead.

LUCY. I'm sure she loves him, Clarence.

CLARENCE. And why shouldn't she? He's the bravest and best chap I ever met. He shouldn't be punished for

the sins of his father, if indeed it should develop he is the son of a degenerate sire, which heaven forbid!

LUCY. I'm dreadfully glad my father wasn't murdered, Clarence.

CLARENCE. And so am I, dear. (*Embraces her suddenly.*) Now I want the answer you were about to return to my question today when your pony shied.

LUCY (*nestling to him*). Oh, Clarence.

CLARENCE (*hugging her tightly*). Now out with it. Will you be my (*spells word*) w-i-f-e?

LUCY (*spelling answer*). Y-e-s—yes!

Enter RUTH R. 2 E. *She stands at door and watches them surprised.*

CLARENCE. Answered like the shot out of a gun, in true Arizona style. Now we're tied together for good and aye and here's to seal the compact. (*They kiss.*)

RUTH (*advancing C. and coughing*). What are you doing, children? (CLARENCE and LUCY *separate in confusion, both going up R.*)

CLARENCE (*laughingly*). We'd better do our courting in the corral, Lucy. (*Both laugh and exit hurriedly R. U. E.*)

RUTH (*going up stage R. slowly*). They love each other—their lives are not full of worry like mine, alas. (*Walks about sighingly, then sits R. at table.*) Tonight I shall know the truth! What is it oppresses my heart and fills it with despair? Is it ordained that my vow doom me to unutterable misery? Come what may, I must bring the guilty to punishment. And yet, why should I dream of revenge? Are there not laws to avenge my father? (*In agony.*) Silvera said the assassin's name was Morton and that he had a son. Is Harold, by some strange fate, that son? My God, it cannot be so; and yet, it may be true, for I know little regarding him. Ah, how shall I solve the mystery and not go mad—mad? (*Sits with head bowed.*)

Enter MORTON, R. U. E. *He starts on seeing RUTH at table and comes down to table irresolutely.*

MORTON (*after a pause during which he has surveyed her tenderly*). Miss Arlington.

RUTH (*starting up and half shrinking from him*). You, Mr. Morton!

MORTON. You shrink from me as from some vile thing. If my presence is distasteful to you I will depart. (*Turns as if to go.*)

RUTH (*in anguish*). No, no, not that, Mr. Morton.

MORTON (*turns to her calmly*). I desired to speak to you before returning to my camp which is menaced by Indians.

RUTH. This is conjecture merely—

MORTON (*interrupts her as he takes shaft of an arrow from his pocket and lays it on the table before her*). Examine this and see if what I say is conjecture.

RUTH (*examining object with horror*). It is a broken arrow and sprinkled with blood—

MORTON. It was found beside the bodies of three sheep herders by Black Panther three miles from this place on the road to Willow Springs.

RUTH. It is horrible.

MORTON. This is indeed an outbreak and many lives will be sacrificed before the rebellion is crushed. Before I go to my men who require my aid—

RUTH (*interrupts widely*). You must not go—it will mean your death!

MORTON. It is my duty even though death be my portion. I shall go.

RUTH. But not without an escort which I am able and willing to supply you with.

MORTON. I need no escort. I have had brushes with these Apaches before and know how to match cunning for cunning, artifice for artifice. Before I go, however, I desire to make an avowal which means far more than life to me. (*After pause.*) It is—it is, that I love you with all my soul!

RUTH (*in anguish*). I knew it must come. (*Weeps.*)

MORTON (*leaning over her tenderly*). I more than love—I adore you! I had looked forward with confidence and longing to the day when I might ask you to be my wife, but now—but now—? (*Pauses.*)

RUTH (*tearfully*). Now—?

MORTON (*with an effort*). This man Silvera has raised up the phantom of your murdered father to mock me and crush my hopes.

RUTH (*fearfully*). What do you mean?

MORTON. I am Charles Morton's son!

RUTH (*uttering a cry of horror*). His son! My God, his son!

MORTON (*passionately*). But I swear to you upon my honor that my father was no assassin. This charge was advanced by this wretch to further some scheme of his own, believe me.

RUTH (*despairingly*). It may be so, I know not. The time has come for you to justify yourself and him. Speak!

MORTON. My father was an expert mining engineer. He came to Arizona six years ago while in the employ of a mining syndicate, in search of mines, leaving my mother and myself at our home in Baltimore. What befell him here we never learned. He returned after an absence of a year, but despite my mother's protests, went back to the mines again, broken in health and spirits. Two years ago we learned of his death at Santa Fe. I had just finished my course of study in a mining school and entered the employ of a railroad company as surveyor. For six months, as you know, I and my men have been surveying a line from Tucson to and beyond Willow Springs.

RUTH. Yes, I know—I know!

MORTON. One day, three months ago, you and I met on the mesa. I had been thrown from my horse and painfully injured. You found me and like a good Samaritan nursed me until I completely recovered. It was during these heavenly days of convalescence, that I learned to love you and my passion has grown from day to day, hour to hour, until now it rages like a consuming fever in my heart!

RUTH (*essays to speak, but her voice fails her and she sinks weeping upon table*).

MORTON. Just as I was about to reveal my secret to you, this man Silvera rose like an avenging Nemesis in my path and with a word shattered into fragments the happy dream

that had converted my life into a veritable paradise. I perceived the doubts his perfidious story had raised in your mind and I resolved to make my avowal and then say farewell to you until I was enabled to clear my father's name of the odium cast upon it by this scoundrel!

RUTH (*passionately.*) There is a mystery here, and until it is solved, I—I—

MORTON (*eagerly*). Yes—yes—?

RUTH. I shall hold my answer in reserve.

Enter MRS. OGDEN *L. U. E.* She starts upon seeing others and stands watching them.

MORTON (*taking RUTH's hand*). Then I have not completely lost your confidence?

RUTH (*rising*). No. (MORTON kisses RUTH'S hand. MRS. OGDEN utters a cry and turns her face. RUTH and MORTON separate in confusion.)

MRS. OGDEN (*with averted face*). Go right ahead. I'm not looking.

MORTON (*laughingly*). You nearly caught someone that time, Mrs. Ogden. (*Goes to window and looks off R.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*to RUTH C.*). I suppose it's o'tt like the measles on the Jenkins baby. When is the wedding to be, Ruth?

RUTH. You are precipitating matters with a vengeance, Mrs. Ogden.

MRS. OGDEN (*arms akimbo at C.*). That's the proper course to pursue in love affairs, my dear. I didn't do any shillyshallying after Mr. Ogden—God rest his soul!—came to the point with me. It was, will you have me, Mary? I said, aye, quick and loud and we to a wagon and off to the parson who did the rest.

RUTH. They don't do things so hurriedly in Arizona, Mrs. Ogden.

(*Hoofbeats off R. U. E. All start. RUTH goes up R. to window. MORTON stands at R. U. E. MRS. OGDEN stands up L.*)

MRS. OGDEN. That must be Mr. Hopkins coming for his custard pie.

Enter SILVERA R. U. E. He starts on seeing MORTON, then turns to RUTH and follows her down C.

SILVERA (*to RUTH*). I must speak to you alone.

RUTH (*coldly*). This gentleman and lady are my friends and confidants. You may speak freely before them. What have you to say?

SILVERA. It is a private matter—

RUTH (*interrupts*). There can be nothing private between us, Silvera. Speak!

SILVERA (*looking about perplexed*). Well, so be it. I wish to warn you against this man. (*Points to MORTON up C.*)

RUTH (*facing him boldly*). You wish to inform me that he is the son of Charles Morton, who, you say, murdered my father. I know it.

SILVERA (*amazed*). You know it!

MORTON (*coldly to SILVERA*). Yes, for I myself told her.

Enter CLARENCE R. U. E. He stands and watches others.

SILVERA (*angrily*). Caramba! Did you also tell her that your father, after killing his victim, stole his papers and sold them to a man at Santa Fe?

MORTON (*coolly facing SILVERA*). You lie, you dog! (*He strikes SILVERA in face.*)

SILVERA (*staggering L. and half drawing dagger, which he replaces as he recovers himself*). I kill you for that blow some day, Morton.

CLARENCE (*to MORTON*). Give him another punch for me, Morton.

RUTH (*going to R. U. E. and pointing off*). Leave my house, Silvera, and never darken its doors again!

CLARENCE (*threateningly to SILVERA*). Clear out, before I kick you out.

SILVRA (*starts, then recovers himself with a laugh and goes to R. U. E. jauntily. He bows to RUTH*). You have the last word today. Tomorrow it will be my turn. Beware! (*He looks at others and then, with a disdainful laugh, exits R. U. E.*)

CLARENCE. Now that the air is purified, I have to communicate important news to you; Morton.

MORTON (*surprised*). News, Clarence?

CLARENCE. One of your men, Jack Smith, has just arrived from your camp and announces that your camp is surrounded by Apaches.

MORTON (*going to R. U. E.*). It is as I suspected. I must hasten.

RUTH (*clinging to MORTON*). I dread to have you leave me. Let me go with you!

MORTON (*caressing RUTH*). It is impossible, love.

RUTH. Then we must help you. Clarence, rouse up our cowboys and off to the rescue.

CLARENCE. I'll do it with all my heart. Good-by, mother. (*Kisses Mrs. OGDEN*.)

Enter LUCY R. 2 E. and HOPKINS R. U. E.

MRS. OGDEN. Good-by, my son, until tomorrow. Remember, your father was a soldier.

CLARENCE. I wont forget it. (*To LUCY who meets him C.*) Good-by, Lucy, I'll meet you after the picnic. (*Kisses her hastily, she embracing him.*) Goodby, Mr. Hopkins. I leave mother to you.

HOPKINS. Have no fear on that account, my boy. I'll take care of your mother.

CLARENCE. Thank you. I'm off. (*Exit hastily R. U. E.*)

MORTON (*up C. with RUTH*). If we do not return before noon tomorrow, it will be because we are dead. Farewell.

RUTH (*embracing MORTON*). You will return—God will protect you!

MORTON. If I die, hunt down Silvera and clear my father's name of the slander he has cast upon it.

RUTH. I swear it, Harold. Go, and God speed you! (*RUTH waves off MORTON, who exits R. U. E.* LUCY stands with RUTH at door, looking off, tearfully clinging to her. HOPKINS stands down R. watching others. MRS. OGDEN stands L. C. well up stage. Hoofbeats and cheers off R. U. as—)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: *Same as Act I, the next morning. At rise discovered LUCY at window C., looking off R. Scene well illuminated.*

LUCY (*as she looks off R. eagerly*). Eight o'clock and not a word from Willow Springs. Did they drive off the Apaches? Is Clarence alive or dead? Maybe Mr. Morton and he have been killed and scalped. This suspense is terrible.

Enter HOPKINS R. U. E. LUCY runs to meet him

HOPKINS (*kissing her*). How is my little girl?

LUCY (*eagerly*). Any news from the front, papa?

HOPKINS. Not a word, Lucy.

LUCY (*falling upon him and weeping*). I shall go mad.

HOPKINS (*caressing her*). My sweetheart crying! What ails you, Lucy?

LUCY (*after a pause, drying her eyes*). It is a girl's privilege to cry, papa, if she wants to.

HOPKINS (*laughingly as he leads her down C.*). Of course, Pet. I wouldn't give the snap of my finger for a girl who couldn't cry as easily as I can back one of Mrs. Ogden's custard pies off the table. (*Confidentially*). Now, Lucy, if you were to eat more of those pies—

LUCY (*peevishly*). Don't talk to me about custard pies, papa!

HOPKINS. Well, what is the matter with you? Are you homesick?

LUCY. No.

HOPKINS (*suddenly*). By gosh! I know what it is! That brindle calf Clarence gave you is dead! (*Looks at LUCY triumphantly*.)

LUCY (*shaking her head*). No.

HOPKINS. Ahem! Then you've had a quarrel with Ruth.

LUCY. No.

HOPKINS. You are pale. It's the alkali. You've got dyspepsia.

LUCY (*laughing*). It's not my stomach, papa. It's my heart!

HOPKINS (*starts*). Great Scott! Heart disease! I never knew it ran in the family.

LUCY. You're a ninny, papa. (*Looks about, then whispers to him tragically*). I—I'm in love!

HOPKINS. Merciful Cæsar! That appears to run in the family, too! I don't wonder you cry. Who's the guilty one?

LUCY. Clarence.

HOPKINS. Clarence! And how long has this love affair been going on under my nose?

LUCY. Three months.

HOPKINS. I see now why you cried—the rascal refused you!

LUCY. No, sir, he wouldn't dare!

HOPKINS. Do you want him real bad, Lucy?

LUCY (*fervently*). If we do not marry, my heart disease will be the death of me.

HOPKINS. Then durn me, he will marry you if I have to drag him to the altar with a lariat!

LUCY (*laughingly*). He's willing to be led by me, papa.

HOPKINS. Ho, ho! Then you've settled it between you?

LUCY. Yes. Now he's gone to fight the Apaches and may never return. Boo, hoo! (*Weeps on HOPKINS' shoulder*.)

HOPKINS (*caressing her*). Don't cry any more, Lucy. We'll know the truth soon.

LUCY. I don't want the truth or anything else. I want my Clarence.

HOPKINS. If I had a balloon, I'd get him for you, pet.

Enter WHITE BIRD R. U. E., *singing softly. When she sees others at C. she pauses for a moment, then comes down C. to them.*

WHITE BIRD (*to others*). Miss Allington here? Must see her.

LUCY (*eagerly*). Here's White Bird returned! Any news, White Bird?

Enter RUTH R. 2 E. *She stands at entrance and listens, then gradually goes to C.*

WHITE BIRD. Palefaces fight Injuns at Willow Springs.
Many sent to happy hunting grounds.

RUTH (*eagerly coming forward*). Tell us everything,
White Bird. What have you heard?

WHITE BIRD. Panther him say palefaces drive off Injuns
—kill six, hurt many more.

LUCY. Killed six—palefaces or Indians?

WHITE BIRD. Injuns.

RUTH. Any palefaces killed?

WHITE BIRD. Panther say no. One paleface wounded.

RUTH (*eagerly*). Who was he?

WHITE BIRD. Clarence Og'en.

LUCY (*tearfully*). Oh, Ruth!

RUTH (*caressing Lucy*). Courage, Lucy. (*To WHITE BIRD.*)—Was he badly wounded?

WHITE BIRD. Him shot in arm—scratch only. Right arm,
here. (*Indicates the forearm*.)

HOPKINS (*to Lucy*). He'll have to hug you left-handed
for awhile, Lucy.

WHITE BIRD. Morton tell Panther him half starved—all
will come soon for powwow.

RUTH (*joyously*). There is little to mourn over, Lucy.
We will give them a royal reception befitting heroes return-
ing victorious from the field of battle! (*Goes to L. U. E.,*
calls.) Mrs. Ogden!

Enter MRS. OGDEN L. U. E. She shows surprise.

RUTH (*to MRS. OGDEN*). Our men have driven off the
Apaches and are to be here soon. We must give them a
breakfast fit for a king!

MRS. OGDEN. I knew they would. Was anyone hurt?

RUTH. Clarence was the only one hurt—

MRS. OGDEN (*starts*). My boy wounded?

RUTH. A mere trifle, Mrs. Ogden. He was shot in the
arm.

MRS. OGDEN. That makes it easy for me. If he had been
shot in the head—

HOPKINS (*interrupting smilingly*). He would be playing

croquet with the angels by this time, Mrs. Ogden. (*All laugh.*)

RUTH (*to Mrs. OGDEN*). Hasten with the breakfast, Mrs. Ogden. We have no time to lose!

HOPKINS (*at L. C., to Mrs. OGDEN*). And don't forget those flapjacks, Mrs. Ogden. Next to your custard pies, they've got the tightest grip on my affections.

MRS. OGDEN. I wont forget them, Mr. Hopkins. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

RUTH (*as she bustles about, putting on her hat, gloves, etc.*). I'm off to meet them on the road. Will you join me for a ride, Lucy?

LUCY (*running up stage*). I wouldn't miss it for the world!

HOPKINS. What's to become of me, girls?

RUTH (*at R. U. E. with LUCY*). You may help Mrs. Ogden prepare those flapjacks.

LUCY. And those custard pies. (*Exeunt with RUTH, R. U. E., laughing.*)

HOPKINS (*at R. U. E., looking off after them*). If I do, there will be none left for either of you, I fear. (*Aside as he turns L.*) The news of this Apache raid should turn me a pretty penny. It will reduce the value of property materially and Jones now will be forced to sell me that Santa Bita land at my figure—\$22,000. If I get it at that price, as I am certain to do, I'll clean up a trifle of \$50,000 from my Chicago syndicate. With that sum in my bank, I should be able to settle down and—and—by jingo! get married!

WHITE BIRD (*aside to HOPKINS up stage C.*). You tellee Misce Allington no listen to Silvera. Him bad man.

HOPKINS. I guess we know that, White Bird.

WHITE BIRD. Silvera comin' with Sheriff today to 'rest Morton.

HOPKINS (*starts*). How the deuce do you know that? Arrest him for defending himself and his men against a bunch of renegade Indians?

WHITE BIRD. Not know yet wha' for. (*Goes to window and looks off L.*) See, dere Silvera and Sheriff.

HOPKINS. (*Goes to window and looks L.*). Yes, there

they are. What new deviltry is this? Morton away fighting Apaches and Silvera awaits his coming with a warrant of arrest!

WHITE BIRD (*goes to R. U. E.*). White Bird watch for Misce Allington's sake. (*Exit R. U. E.*)

(SILVERA and JONES *pass window C.*, then go to *R. U. E.*)

HOPKINS (*at C.*). This will be a surprise to the girls. What will Ruth say now?

Enter SILVERA and JONES *R. U. E.*. They look about as they come *C.*

HOPKINS (*to SILVERA*). Lost anything, Silvera?

SILVERA (*surlily*). No. Looking for Morton.

HOPKINS. Morton doesn't camp at this ranch. He's not here.

SILVERA (*surprised*). Not here? Escaped, eh? (*To JONES L. C.*). You must find him, Jones.

JONES. I'll git him if so be he shows up hereabouts.

HOPKINS (*to JONES*). What do you want of Morton?

JONES. I haint ready to make that public jist yit, Mr. Hopkins. Whar did he go?

HOPKINS. To Willow Springs to clean out a bunch of dirty Apaches.

JONES. Hum! I heerd the Apaches were up to some deviltry up this way, but I didn't suppose Morton hed grit enough to face 'em. Did he git through the brush all O. K.?

HOPKINS. He will be here soon and report to you, of course.

JONES. Wall, pending his arrival, we'd better wait outside, Silvera. I specs he carries a gun, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. You bet he does, and he knows how to use it, too.

JONES (*laughingly*). I reckon he do, ef reports I hear be kerrect.

SILVERA (*to JONES*). We better wait for him outside and when he comes here, we will bag him.

JONES. Wall, I reckon we will. Thar aint nobody gits away from Bill Jones of Tombstone when he's made up his

CLARENCE (*passing dish to Hopkins*). Here you are, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS (*taking dish and eating*). Now come what may, I'm content.

RUTH. That being settled, Mr. Morton, let us have the story of the battle.

MORTON. It was a mere skirmish, not a battle. When we got to Willow Springs we found the boys entrenched behind their wagons awaiting the Apaches. The Indians came at daylight, rushed us, lost a few of their number and decamped hastily.

CLARENCE. You bet they did! We routed them at the first fire. We sent seven of them to paradise.

HOPKINS. Paradise, eh? You mean Belzebub. More flapjacks, please.

MORTON. Come, why make the deaths of these deluded savages the subject of jest? They followed the inexorable bent of their nature and who is privileged to judge them except God? They fought according to their conception of what is right and they paid the penalty of their rashness with their lives.

HOPKINS. Bah! You can't justify any man or men who make robbery a pastime and murder a pleasing diversion.

CLARENCE. I agree with Mr. Hopkins that the only Indian in whom you can place implicit confidence and trust is a dead Indian.

HOPKINS (*extending hand to Clarence across the table*). That's the spirit, Clarence! You have shown yourself to be indeed worthy the daughter of so great a father.

CLARENCE (*surprised*). Lucy has told you then?

LUCY (*shyly*). He forced the secret from me, Clarence.

HOPKINS (*rising and holding aloft a glass*). A toast!

ALL (*rising glass in hand*). A toast!

HOPKINS. Here's to the betrothal of Lucy Hopkins and Clarence Ogdern. May their years be long and may they have childern a plenty.

LUCY (*abashed*). How can you be so rude, papa? (*All drink, laugh and resume their seats.*)

CLARENCE. Pardon us for interrupting you, Morton. You

were discoursing upon the Apache nature, I believe, when Mr. Hopkins so rudely broke in on our conversation with his demand for flapjacks. (*All laugh.*)

RUTH. To be serious, I believe Mr. Morton to be in the right. These poor Indians, according to their perverted view, are not to be wholly condemned. Have we not driven them out of the land of their forefathers? Have we not robbed and pillaged them and have not they been the prey of legalized adventurers until their souls have turned sour harboring thoughts of rebellion and revenge? They have committed many shameful acts in reprisal, but when we consider that they are savages, they must have some claim upon our indulgence and respect.

HOPKINS (*to CLARENCE*). Pass the flapjacks, please.

CLARENCE (*passing dish*). I pity the future Mrs. Hopkins. She'll have a hard time supplying flapjacks for the bottomless pit that parades itself as the father of Mrs. Clarence Ogden that is to be.

HOPKINS. You never will be a man until you can master a dozen of them at a meal, Clarence. (*All laugh.*)

RUTH (*to MORTON*). Have the soldiers at the fort been notified?

MORTON. I sent a scout to the fort at once and even now the cavalry may be upon the trail of the Apaches. I must see to my men now, if you don't mind. (*Rises with others from table. RUTH and LUCY go up R. MORTON goes to R. U. E. with CLARENCE. MRS. OGDEN busies herself at table.*)

RUTH (*to LUCY*). Come, Lucy, we will have to get a new bandage for Clarence's arm. (*Both look smilingly at CLARENCE and exeunt R. 2 E.*)

CLARENCE (*to MORTON at R. U. E.*). They make a great fuss over a trifle.

MORTON (*laughingly*). You must let them have their way. If they don't have it now, they will have it after they're married. (*Both laugh and exeunt R. U. E.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*eyeing HOPKINS narrowly, continues to work at clearing off table. She hums audibly as if to attract his attention, but he walks to and fro up stage in thought.*

Goes to L. U. E.—aside). If my flapjacks make him dumb, he'll get no more from me! (*Exits L. U. E. with show of temper.*)

HOPKINS (*as he walks up stage*). The shadow of trouble approaches again. I kept them away until after breakfast, but they'll soon be here now, and the devil will be to pay. It will break poor Ruth's heart. Sammy, damme; You must warn Morton so that he may escape while the opportunity knocks at his door. (*Exit R. U. E.*)

Enter RUTH R. 2 E. She comes C., surprised at being alone. She then turns to table and stands L. in deep thought for a moment. SILVERA is seen at the window and looks in. He then waves his hand and goes to R. U. E. JONES immediately appears at window and crosses to R. U. E.

RUTH. In this happy hour why does my heart revert to the odious charge brought against Harold by Silvera? How may he disprove it as he says he will yet do? (*After a pause.*) Ah, love doubtless will find the way and then unalloyed happiness for both of us.

Enter SILVERA followed by JONES, R. U. E. They come down C.

SILVERA (*at C., to RUTH*). Miss Arlington!

RUTH (*turning quickly with a start*). You, Silvera, and you, Sheriff Jones? To what do I owe the pleasure your unexpected visit affords me?

JONES (*at L. C.*). Ef we told ye, Miss Arlington, I don't calc'late it would make ye feel 'ticularly jubilant.

RUTH (*in surprise*). What do you mean, Mr. Jones?

SILVERA (*to JONES aside*). Let me talk. Stay way till I call. (*To RUTH.*) Before Jones tells you of his business here, I wish to have a talk with you.

RUTH (*disdainfully*). Be brief, Silvera.

SILVERA. You sing another tune soon, maybe. Jones is here to arrest Morton.

RUTH (*alarmed*). Arrest Morton! On what charge, pray?

SILVERA. Highway robbery.

RUTH (*proudly*). A lie hatched by you for your own

purpose! But I tell you it only increases the contempt I feel for you!

SILVERA (*laughs*). Not only did his father kill yours, but he shows the color of the blood in his veins by robbing on the highway and coming to you with sweet words of love.

RUTH (*turning from him and going to R. U. E.*) I shall not listen to you! Leave my house!

SILVERA. I like your spirit and hate to humble it, Miss Arlington. Jones has the proof; ask him. (*Goes leisurely down R. C.*)

RUTH (*comes down C. alarmed and agitated*). What is the nature of this proof? Speak!

SILVERA (*crosses to her at C.*). Before Jones tells you the story I wish to say to you that I love you.

RUTH (*with contempt*). Leave me, leave me! (*Turns from him R.*)

SILVERA (*follows her R.*). Come with me to Mexico where I can house you like a princess of Castile. Promise to be my wife and this man Morton shall go free!

RUTH. I loathe and despise you! Say what you have said to me in Morton's presence and if he does not kill you, then he is not the man I take him for!

SILVERA. No, he shall not kill me, but I him! He struck me yesterday and a Silvera does not forget an insult. He shall die for his crimes and you will be glad to find refuge in my arms! (*Turns to JONES L. C. and calls.*) Jones! This lady says I lied about Morton. Tell her what you know. (*Stands R. C.*)

JONES (*at L. C.*). Wall, it's this way, Miss Arlington. I've got conclusive evidence that Morton is the same chap as has been holding up people in this county for months past.

RUTH (*at C.*). It is false! Morton is no robber.

JONES. Wall, he has to show me and I aint from Missouri nuther. I'm here to get him and get him I must.

RUTH. I shall send for him and he will speedily clear himself of all suspicion.

JONES. Kerrect, Miss Arlington. Jest to satisfy yourself, we'll hide near the window and when he comes ax him these questions—

RUTH (*eagerly*). Go on!

JONES. Ax him if he don't know Jim Sanders and if he didn't hev trouble with him at Tucson last spring. Then ax him if he wasn't in Buffalo Gap about March 9, and if so, what he wus doing thar.

RUTH (*after a pause, agitated*). So, you would have him condemn himself by my treachery! How base!

Enter MORTON R. U. E. *He stands at entrance and watches.*

RUTH. No, I shall not be your instrument to bring this man to his downfall! He is a gentleman and knows how to face such men as you!

MORTON (*comes down C.*). What does this mean, Ruth?

JONES (*presenting a revolver at MORTON*). Hands up, Morton! Quick, or I plunk you for fair!

MORTON (*in surprise holds his hands aloft*). Is this a holdup, Jones?

JONES (*advancing to MORTON C. with revolver before him*). Looks kinder natural, Morton, eh? Guess I'll take yer shooting iron, so's ye won't hurt anybody. (*Takes MORTON'S revolver.*) Now ye're my prisoner.

Enter CLARENCE and HOPKINS, R. U. E. *They stand and watch.*

MORTON. Why am I under arrest, Jones? What is the charge?

JONES. Jist plain highway robbery.

MORTON (*staggers back*). Robbery! Who dare accuse me of so ignominious a crime?

JONES. Jim Sanders.

MORTON. Impossible! Sanders is my friend.

JONES. That's what he thought when he met you at Buffalo Gap last March.

MORTON. Buffalo Gap! I never was at that place in all my life.

RUTH (*at R. C., eagerly*). See! He denies it—he is innocent!

JONES. Wall, he kin tell that to the jedge at Tombstone arter we git thar. Air ye ready fur travel, Morton?

MORTON (*despairingly*). I am guiltless of this crime! (*Looks about*). Does no one believe me? (*Looks at RUTH who sinks in chair L. of table and weeps convulsively*.)

CLARENCE (*coming to MORTON at C. and extending hand*). I believe you, old chap, to the last. (*Shakes hands*.)

HOPKINS (*extending his hand to MORTON*). You may count me in on the confidence game until the last horn blows, my boy. (*Shakes MORTON's hands*.)

MORTON. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. (*TURNS to RUTH at table. Leans over her*.) I care not to justify myself in any other eyes except your own, Miss Arlington. I am the victim of terrible circumstances, but I assure you upon my honor that I am innocent!

RUTH (*weeping*). My heart is bursting.

MORTON (*sadly after a pause*). You do not believe me. It is all over. (*He braces himself, advances to C.*) Sheriff, I am your prisoner. Let the law take its course!

JONES (*putting handcuffs on MORTON's wrists*). I hate to do it, Morton, but it's the law.

MORTON. All will yet be explained and I stand guiltless in the eyes of the world. Then God help the man who has falsely accused me and besmirched my name! (*Looks at SILVERA who stands L. C. and laughs disdainfully*).

Enter WHITE BIRD R. U. E. She crosses to L. C. near sideboard and watches others. Exeunt MORTON and JONES R. U. E. SILVERA goes jauntily up stage and casting a look at RUTH, laughs sardonically as he exits R. U. E.

CLARENCE (*L. C. to HOPKINS*). We must get him out of this if it costs us our scalps.

HOPKINS. We'll do it if it costs us our salvation, my boy. (*They shake hands and exeunt R. U. E.*)

RUTH (*rising wildly and running to R. U. E.*). Harold, Harold, I do believe in your innocence! Gone, gone! Branded a felon! Oh, God, the shame of it!

WHITE BIRD (*crossing to RUTH up R.*). I hear all—Morton him no robber.

RUTH (*eagerly*). What do you say, White Bird?

WHITE BIRD. Silvera tell 'nother man in corral dat he do dis to get revenge on Morton.

RUTH (*embracing* WHITE BIRD). You have saved his honor and my happiness. We shall yet balk Silvera and bring the guilty to justice! (RUTH stands *with arm about* WHITE BIRD up C. *triumphantly until—*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: *Hotel waiting room at Tucson in 4, boxed. Practical doors R. U. E. and L. U. E. Curtained entrance C. with wainscoat backing. A rough desk with register and account books lying thereon stands to L. of C. D. Against wall behind desk is pigeon-hole case, filled with letters and other documents. Round table L. C. with several chairs here and there. Place is plainly furnished. Over R. U. E. is the sign "Bar Room." Various signs may be placed on the walls, such as "In God We Trust, to Hell with Credit," and "Church Every Sabbath in the Big Sembling Tent," etc. See Scene Plot for stage setting.*

At rise stage is well illuminated and CLARENCE and several cowboys, in regulation costume, each well armed, are seated or stand about the table L. C. Glasses, bottles and cards are on table. Singing at intervals and loud talk are heard at intervals off R. U. E. Cowboys pass and repass from R. U. E. to C. D. to give a lively effect.

CLARENCE (*at table, to Cowboys*). I tell you it was as fine a scrap as ever I saw and but for Morton, who is now charged with robbery, we would have been scalped!

A COWBOY. I don't think Morton is guilty of that holdup, do you, boys?

COWBOYS (*in a voice*). No!

CLARENCE. You're right there, boys. It's the work of this greaser, Silvera, but how to prove it, I don't know.

Enter PARKER C. D. He is smoking a big cigar and walks jauntily down L. to table.

A COWBOY. I don't like this Silvera's face. He's a tough un all right, all right.

PARKER (*to Cowboys L. of table*). Excuse me, gentlemen, if you'll pardon my presumption in inviting myself to sit at this receptacle for pasteboards and liquor, I'll afford myself the extreme pleasure of taking a hand in this verbal game.

CLARENCE. Chip right in, Jim,

PARKER (*sitting L. at table*). Thank you kindly, Ogden. (*Lights cigar and puts his feet on table.*) Did I hear some gent whisper the name of Silvera as I promenaded into this here abiding place for dyspeptics?

CLARENCE. We were talking of a Mexican named Silvera who had Harold Morton, a friend of mine, arrested for robbing a chap at Buffalo Gap last March.

PARKER (*after a pause during which he smokes furiously*). Is this here greaser gent a shifty-eyed chap with a spade flush complexion, and feet so small they look like the ace of clubs, and wearing diamonds like a society bud at the opery?

CLARENCE. That's his portrait, slick an' clean, Jim.

PARKER. Hum! Did ye ever observe the back of his left hand?

CLARENCE. Not particularly, Jim.

PARKER. P'raps ye hev noticed a scar in the middle thereof that might hev been made by a dagger?

CLARENCE (*after a pause*). Come to think of it, I did. How the deuce did it get there?

PARKER. I put that stamp thar and I reckon it's indelible as a crime on the escutcheon of a Sunday School superintendent.

COWBOYS (*in a voice*). What for, Jim?

PARKER Cheatin'. (*Cowboys crowd around the table eagerly*) You see, 'twas this way. 'Twas three years ago at Santa Fe. Me and him was playin' poker with a sky limit with oodles of checks, blues and yallers on both sides. I don't conceal the fact, gents, that I'm a sporting gent, but

until I turn my toes to the daisies and cash in for a through trip to the golden Jerusalem, thar's no man can face Jim Parker and inform him to his teeth that he didn't play keerds strictly on the square. (*Pauses.*)

COWBOYS (*in a voice*). That's so, Jim!

PARKER. If any human critter tried it 'thout convincing proof, I fancy I would make it most damnably inconvenient for him to remain in my immejit vicinity.

COWBOYS (*in a voice admiringly*). That's the talk, Jim.

PARKER. As I was saying, gents, the greaser hed a tol'able mite the advantage of the game from the start. Two pa'r want worth nuthin' even with aces on top, and threes, wall, they jist delighted in reducing my stack. I was \$800 in the hole and by and by I hed a suspicion that he wus playing me for a tenderfoot, which ruther was a insult to a professional shover of the pasteboards like myself.

CLARENCE (*laughingly*). I guess you got even with him all right.

PARKER. Wall, I kept my optics peeled and finally we comes to a jackpot on his deal with something like \$600 in it before the draw, and me alookin' confidential like at three merry kings. I watches the greaser and calls for two cards. While he was dealin easy like, I gits the flash of a card up his sleeve. He drawed two cards as I thought he would and then he taps me. (*Pauses.*)

COWBOYS (*eagerly*). Go ahead, Jim.

PARKER. Knowing what I did after I seed the flash of that holdout up the greaser's sleeve, I would have been a coyote if I didn't call him instanter. I showed down four monarchs and the greaser—(*pauses*).

CLARENCE What did he have?

PARKER (*pityingly*). What d'ye expect a crooked greaser card sharp would have when he gives the other fellow four kings? Of course, he showed down four lone spots as I expected he would and started to rake in the pot. (*Pause.*)

CLARENCE. And then—?

PARKER. I put my sticker into the back of his hand as he started to rake in the pot, and pinned it to the table like a piece of cheese. While he was a howlin' like hell, I takes

the card layout out'en his sleeve and the lookout decides like a dead game sport that the pot was mine. I rakes in the cash while the indignant spectators kicked the greaser into the street. That greaser was Silvera, a pretty tolable tough who should have been fo'ced years ago to cash in with his boots on, only hell wasn't hankerin' after any more of his breed.

Enter SILVERA and JONES C. D. They come down C.

CLARENCE (*points to SILVERA*). That is Silvera, Jim. Is he the man you refer to?

PARKER (*turning leisurely and surveying SILVERA C.*) That's the pup, all right.

SILVERA (*goes to table L. C.*). Did I hear my name mentioned, gentlemen?

PARKER (*smoking coolly*). P'raps so, Silvera. How's yer hand?

SILVERA (*starts*). My hand?

PARKER. Seein' as how ye didn't leave me your address after they kicked ye out of Santa Fe, I was unable to inquire how that little cut on your left hand might be.

SILVERA (*threateningly*). What do you mean? Caramba! Jim Parker! (*Starts violently.*) You here!

PARKER. You'll pardon a sporting gent for being here 'cause I assure you on the honor of Jim Parker, that if I had known ye were in this shebang, I would have stayed away. (*Rises, crosses to C.*)

SILVERA. You looking for trouble again, eh?

PARKER (*drawing bowie knife with quick motion and placing the point against SILVERA's vest*). See here, greaser! I reckon 'twont be healthy for you to monkey with me nor my friends from now on. If ye do, I'll not slice yer hand this time, but yer liver!

SILVERA (*cowcering*). I do nothing to you, Jim. (*Laughs jovially.*) Come, let bygones be bygones. Let's have a drink.

PARKER (*putting up his knife*). It's agin my principles to drink with greasers.

SILVERA. Then the others will drink with me. (*Turns to Cowboys.*) Come, boys, and drink with me.

COWBOYS (*to PARKER*). Shall we do it, Jim?

PARKER. Of co'se, but see he don't p'isen ye.

COWBOYS (*laughing*). We'll see to that, Jim. (*They rush to R. U. E. and excunt, followed by SILVERA, who casts a malignant look at PARKER as he exits R. U. E.*)

CLARENCE (*to PARKER down C.*). I'm satisfied this fellow has fixed up a case against my friend Morton and I want your help, Jim, to save him.

PARKER. All right, pard. If Silvera made the charge, it's dollars to red apples yer friend is innocent. Join me at the bar in five minutes and I'm your huckleberry for anything from fighting tarantulas to skinning suckers!

CLARENCE (*shaking PARKER's hand*). Thank you, pard.

PARKER. In five minutes, Ogden. (*Exits R. U. E.*)

Enter HOPKINS C. D. Comes down C.

CLARENCE (*at C., to HOPKINS*). What luck, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. The judge refuses to grant any continuances. If Morton, in the present state of public feeling against him, goes to trial, his conviction is as inevitable as death and taxes!

CLARENCE (*thoughtfully*). There's only one way to save Morton. He must jump his bail. Will he do it?

HOPKINS. I'd hate to suggest that plan to Morton. He's got queer ideas of honor in a country where I can get anybody's throat slit for a peanut!

CLARENCE. Then we must act secretly and do what our judgment dictates. Where is Ruth?

HOPKINS. I left her with Morton on the boulevard near the court house. She ought to be here presently.

CLARENCE (*going to C. D. and looking off L.*). They are coming. Let us go to the bar and talk it over. I want to introduce you to a friend.

HOPKINS (*going to R. U. E.*). Bless my soul, Clarence, I'm ready to meet anybody now since I saw that court house. One fellow told me it was the palace of justice. Ho, ho! I wonder what the jail looks like?

CLARENCE. It's a reminder of the infernal regions. We

must save Morton from spending even an hour beneath its roof.

HOPKINS (*taking CLARENCE's hand*). And we'll do it, if I never get the sight of a custard pie again, my boy! (*Exits R. U. E. with CLARENCE following him.*)

Enter RUTH, followed by MORTON, C. D. As they come down C., JONES enters, C. D., after them. RUTH goes to table L. C., MORTON to C.

JONES (*going to MORTON*). I reckon it wont take Miss Arlington long to git rested up. We hev to be at the cote-house in fifteen minutes

MORTON. Have no fear, Jones. I'll be there on time.

RUTH. Mr. Morton will keep his word, Mr. Jones. I'll vouch for him.

JONES. I'll take yer word for it, Miss Arlington. (*To MORTON.*) Ye agree not to skip, Morton?

MORTON (*extending his hand*). There's my hand upon it, Jones.

JONES (*shakes MORTON's hand*). Ye've got an honest grip all right, Morton. I don't know what this greaser has got agin ye, but if he's playing me for a tenderfoot, he'll find he's run agin a regular tornado.

MORTON. The man has lied and you can't expect anything but venom from a rattlesnake.

JONES. Mebbe ye're right, Morton. I'll be back in fifteen minutes. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

RUTH (*sitting R. at table*). This suspense is driving me mad, Harold! The thought of the danger that threatens you, robs me of peace—

MORTON (*interrupting*). Away with such thoughts, Ruth! You must trust in providence as I do. My case is not hopeless.

RUTH. It is my heart that feels oppressed. I believe you innocent, but where is the legal proof to clear you in the minds of judge and jury?

MORTON (*sitting L. at table*). Too true, alas! It is my word against Silvera and a number of perjured witnesses he has enlisted in his service. What hold he can have upon

Sanders to prevail upon him to swear my life away after all I've done for him, is beyond my comprehension.

RUTH. The scoundrel has built up his case against you with devilish ingenuity!

MORTON. If I could find Wingfield, the gambler whose life I saved at Tucson the very day I am accused of robbing Sanders, my victory would be complete.

RUTH. A slender reed to cling to, Harold.

MORTON. I have searched for him for ten days in vain. When last heard from he was at Tucson, but he left there a month ago and has not since been located.

RUTH. You cannot face a jury with your unsupported statement of innocence as against half a dozen bought witnesses who will swear to your guilt. You must escape at once, Harold!

MORTON (*starting in surprise*). Escape? Escape with this odious charge clinging to me like a vampire, eating my heart out and making of me a shameful thing, too cowardly to face my fellows, dodging at shadows, a prey to incessant fear? No, no! I had rather hang a score of times than save my life at such a price!

RUTH. You are selfish—

MORTON (*interrupting*). Selfish!

RUTH. You do not realize that I have the right to demand that you do this thing for my sake, for my love for you has earned that right—

MORTON (*interrupting*). Ruth—

RUTH (*passionately*). Stop! Let me proceed! Your danger has roused my fighting blood to the pitch that I cast to the winds all thought of honor, custom and law! You belong to me now, and I will not tamely submit to losing you when it is within my power to save you!

MORTON. How can you save me, Ruth?

RUTH. By aiding you to escape! You will thus be afforded additional time in which to find Wingfield and I—I will be relieved of the horror your conviction would bring to my heart!

MORTON. It is your woman's heart that shrinks from the thought of my peril, and I love you the more for it,

Ruth. But do not ask me to break my word given to the man who has just left us relying upon my honor to keep it inviolate. I am no coward, but to flee from trial when I know myself to be innocent of the charge laid against me, would involve me in disgrace which I never could live down. No, I have given my word to Jones, and come what may, it must be kept!

Enter CLARENCE and HOPKINS R. U. E. They come down C.

RUTH. Let it be as you wish, Harold.

CLARENCE (*aside to HOPKINS C.*). I must have a word with Ruth alone. Have Morton join you at the bar.

HOPKINS. Certainly. (*To MORTON.*) I have a little business of a private character I wish to transact with you, Morton. Come, let us have a drink. (*Goes to R. of table and takes MORTON's arm.*)

MORTON. Is it important? I have little time to spare, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS. Hang it, Morton, I'll have you know that everything I do is important. You must excuse us for a few moments, Ruth. (*Drags MORTON to R. U. E.*) Morton and I want to wash the alkali out of our throats and then have a powwow. Come along, sir. (*Exit R. U. E., dragging MORTON with him.*)

CLARENCE (*looking about—whispers to RUTH*). I want you to join me in a desperate game, Ruth.

RUTH (*going to C. with CLARENCE*). Game?

CLARENCE. It concerns Morton.

RUTH (*starts*). Morton!

CLARENCE. We're going to abduct him and rush him across the Mexican line!

RUTH (*joyously*). The very thing I had considered! I pleaded with him to escape, but he refused to entertain the thought.

CLARENCE. Well, we will force him to entertain it I have just fixed it with a friend of mine, Jim Parker.

RUTH. Who is he?

CLARENCE. A gambler, as whole-souled a fellow as ever you saw. He's out now rounding up the cowboys and they

ought to be here any minute now. (*Goes to C. D. and looks off nervously.*)

RUTH. How may I assist you, Clarence?

CLARENCE. We haven't figured that out yet, Ruth. (*Returns to C.*)

Enter PARKER R. U. E. He comes down C.

RUTH. Who is this friend in need?

CLARENCE (*turns and sees PARNER. Takes his arm and leads him to RUTH.*). I'll introduce you. Miss Arlington, Jim Parker. Mr. Parker, Miss Arlington.

RUTH (*extending hand to PARKER*). I'm delighted to meet Mr. Parker.

PARKER (*taking her hand and removing his hat, bowing with wide sweep*). Miss Arlington, I play square when I inform you that this moment that marks the beginning of our friendship, is the happiest in my checkered career.

CLARENCE. He's true blue, Ruth.

PARKER. I assure the lady, Ogden, that I am not stacking the cards when I say that both of you will find me as good as four aces in any game of hearts like I understand this one to be.

RUTH. I believe you, Mr. Parker. A gentleman in whom I am greatly interested has been falsely accused of crime by a man named Silvera.

PARKER. I know him, Miss Arlington. He's as cowardly a snake as ever knifed a man in the back or shifted the cut on a friend.

RUTH. You appear to know his characteristics well, Mr. Parker.

PARKER. I played poker with him and it don't take me long to stack up a man as soon as I see him shuffle the cards. This Silvera is a squealer and a squealer aint to be trusted no more'n a coyote in a meat emporium.

CLARENCE. That's my philosophy, Jim.

PARKER. I'm a plain, hard-working, honest shover of pasteboards, Miss, and I'm on the square, as everybody between Tombstone and Tucson can testify on oath.

RUTH (*eagerly*). You speak of Tucson? Have you been there recently?

PARKER. I spent a tolerable time at Tucson, Miss Arlington. I made some money, too, but there came a right smart crowd of toughs there, some of 'em so weak-kneed that they squealed when they lost their piles and caused me and my pard considerable trouble. We got into a squabble one day and after we separated, the coroner picked up the remains of three men who were scattered about the place. I came to Tombstone, where they kill a man every other day, and am enjoying a sort of peaceful vacation.

RUTH. Were you at Tucson last March—the 9th of March?

PARKER. Somebody must have told you, Miss Arlington. That was the night I had a quartette of jacks to another chap's four tens and when we showed down he showed fight. I showed a gun first and took the pot.

RUTH (*laughingly*). Did you know a man named Wingfield at Tucson?

PARKER (*starts*). Did I know him? He was my working pardner, Miss.

RUTH (*eagerly*). Your partner! Then you must know his whereabouts! Where is he, Mr. Parker, where is he?

PARKER. Dealing faro bank at Tucson, or was a month ago.

RUTH (*annoyed*). At Tucson! It is so far away and we need Wingfield today! What shall we do?

PARKER. You need Wingfield, Miss Arlington?

RUTH. If he were here today he would be in a position to save the honor, if not the life, of the man I love.

PARKER (*eagerly*). You will perhaps pardon me, Miss, if I take a peek at the cut card and ask you in what way my pard can be of assistance to the man you love?

CLARENCE. It's this way, Jim. Morton hopes to prove by Wingfield that he was not at Buffalo Gap on the 9th of March, when it is charged he robbed a man, but at Tucson, sixty miles away.

RUTH. Wingfield is needed to prove an alibi for Morton. Oh, how can we secure his evidence?

PARKER. I don't quite get onto the curves of this game yet. Are you sure Wingfield knows your friend, Morton?

RUTH. Was not Wingfield attacked by a gang of Mexican roughs at Tucson on the 9th of March?

PARKER. Yes, I'm sure that was the date, Miss. I've got it down in my diary. (*Takes book from pocket and turns over several pages. Reads at random, RUTH to his R. and CLARENCE at his L., watching him eagerly.*) Laundry bill, \$2—that aint it. Wingfield cuts the nose off a greaser—(*to other*)—we're getting close, 'cause that little fracas caused the big row. (*Looks at book.*) Yes, here it is! March 9, Wingfield attacked by Mexicans and almost cut into ribbons.

RUTH (*fervently*). Thank God, Morton spoke the truth! (*To PARKER.*) Go on, Mr. Parker, go on! Anything more there?

PARKER (*reading from book*). Would have been sent to kingdom come in fragments but for a railroad surveyor, who jumped in and drove the Mexicans away like pups after a bone.

RUTH. The name of this rescuer—was it Morton?

PARKER (*thoughtfully putting up book*). By gigner, now that you mention it I remember Wingfield telling me it was that very name!

RUTH (*joyously*). He is saved—saved!

CLARENCE. He is not yet, but will be, Ruth.

PARKER. Excuse me, Miss, but the truth didn't percolate through my cocoanut until just now. Morton, who saved my pard, is charged with robbing a fellow at some other point on the same day.

RUTH. Yes, yes!

PARKER. Now, them two facts are as good as two aces before the draw. Now comes the draw. If my pard were here today, he would prove an alibi for your friend.

RUTH (*eagerly*). I follow you, Mr. Parker!

PARKER. That's the third ace I have drawed from my gray matter, and I've got two more cards to look at. I picks up the second card in my draw, which is that we can't get Wingfield from Tucson in time for the trial, and that's a four spot.

RUTH. There's another card to look at, Mr. Parker.

PARKER. That's right. I take it up and find on scanning my hand that I have three aces and two four spots, and that is a pretty good hand even for Arizona unless Silvera is dealing.

RUTH (*eagerly*). You mean—?

PARKER (*coolly lighting a cigar*). That I'm going to carry Morton to the Mexican line and delay the play until we can get Wingfield to referee the dispute between us and the law as represented by Bill Jones, the judge and jury!

CLARENCE. That's the talk, Jim!

RUTH. There is no other course. Morton is innocent and he shall not be made to suffer! Jones will be here at any moment. We must be prepared for him.

PARKER. If you will take a hand, Miss Arlington, I'd suggest you hold him up when I give the signal. Then we'll throw his hand into the discard and rule him out of the game.

RUTH. I'll do whatever you say, Mr. Parker. But mind, there must be no shooting if it can be prevented.

CLARENCE. There wont be, because we'll have the drop on the other fellows.

PARKER. That's the rule we must follow. Get the drop and it will be our turn to crow.

RUTH (*going to C. D.*). We have no time to lose! Let us hasten to complete arrangements! (*Exit C. D. followed by PARKER and CLARENCE.*)

Enter SILVERA R. U. E. He stands at door and looks off, shaking his fist as he talks to himself.

SILVERA (*coldly as he looks*). You cannot escape me, Morton! You shall feel my power today. You shall be convicted and the jury I have selected will not hesitate to impose the death penalty! (*Laughs.*) Ha, ha, ha! I shall win the woman you thought to wed. She shall be mine despite her scorn of me, even if I have to carry her to my den in Sonora, where none shall find her until I have finished with her! I shall curb her spirit, and if trickery is

unavailing, force will accomplish my ends! But first, you shall die, for I hate you, and a Silvera hates only to kill!
(*Stands at door looking off.*)

Enter RUTH C. D. She comes down C. excitedly.

RUTH (*going to table*). Morton not yet here? The plot works well and all is in readiness. I pray God we may succeed, for his sake.

SILVERA (*seeing RUTH follows her down C.*). I am happy to see you, Miss Arlington.

RUTH (*turns to him C. with a start*). You, Silvera! I cannot say the pleasure is mutual.

SILVERA (*laughingly*). I admire your spirit, your honesty, Miss Arlington. You are indeed fit to become the wife of a Silvera.

RUTH (*annoyed*). Your presence annoys me! Leave me!

Enter MORTON R. U. E., followed by HOPKINS. They stand at entrance and watch, gradually working down C.

SILVERA (*suddenly taking RUTH's hand*). You shall listen to me!

RUTH (*struggling to free herself*). Release me or I shall call for help!

SILVERA (*drawing her to him*). I shall stifle your cries with my kisses, dear! I love you madly and I have sworn that you shall wed me alone! Your eyes fascinate—adden me! Give you up to Morton? Never! One kiss I will have—(*seeks to kiss RUTH*).

MORTON (*grasping SILVERA and throwing him L. with force, then sustaining RUTH—to SILVERA*). You Mexican hound! If this woman you have insulted but gives the word, I shall strangle you at her feet!

SILVERA (*in a rage—drawing a revolver*). Caramba! You shall step before me no more, for I will kill you! (*Raises revolver.*)

HOPKINS (*springing in front of SILVERA with drawn revolver*). Not this trip, greaser! Hand me that gun or I'll blow you full of holes!

SILVERA (*giving revolver to HOPKINS handle forward*).

You have the drop, but no matter—I have my revenge yet.
(*Stands at table.*)

HOPKINS (*putting revolver into pocket*). In that case, Silvera, I'll see to it my revolver is loaded the next time I put it against your waistcoat.

MORTON (*to RUTH*). Did he hurt you, Ruth? If he did—

RUTH. No, no, waste no thought upon him. I have good news for you.

MORTON (*in surprise*). Good news?

RUTH. I have located Wingfield—he is at Tucson!

MORTON (*dejectedly*). At Tucson, and my trial begins within an hour. Unless he testifies in my behalf, I am lost!

RUTH (*in whisper*). We have powerful friends, Harold. Promise me you will trust to me and do as I say.

Enter JONES L. U. E. He comes C. hastily.

MORTON. If it be not to have me escape my trial—yes.

JONES (*to MORTON at C.*). The jedge has sent his clerk with the message that the court is about to convene. Are ye ready?

MORTON. I am ready, Jones.

JONES. I like yer grit, my boy. Whar's yer witnesses?

MORTON (*sadly*). I have just discovered that my principal witness is at Tucson. I shall plead with the judge for a continuance until he may be brought to Tombstone.

JONES. But the jedge says as how he wont grant any continuance as ye had a week to prepare your case.

SILVERA (*laughingly*). That is very bad for the defendant, Jones.

JONES (*angrily to SILVERA*). We don't need no buttin' in in this here conversation, Silvera. (*Loud cheering and hoofbeats heard off L. U. E. All start.*) What's the racket? (JONES goes to C. D. and looks off L.) It's the boys havin' a sort of roundup on the square.

RUTH (*at C., aside to MORTON*). Be firm, Harold. You shall be saved!

MORTON (*surprised*). Saved, Ruth?

JONES (*coming down C.—to MORTON*). Come along, Morton. We kaint keep the jedge waitin'.

Enter PARKER, CLARENCE and six or eight cowboys, C. D. All have revolvers drawn and range themselves in a semi-circle so as to bar the door. RUTH runs up stage, draws her revolver and stands between PARKER and CLARENCE. She points revolver at JONES, who advances to meet the party.

RUTH (aiming revolver at JONES). Hands up, Jones! I shall take charge of the prisoner!

JONES (Holding up his hands). Is this a holdup, Miss?

PARKER (to JONES). The young lady aint fourflushing, is she, boys?

COWBOYS (in a voice). You bet she aint, Jim!

JONES. Don't look like a bluff, I reckon. I warn ye that ye're defyin' the law and will have to answer to the co'te for contempt.

RUTH. We'll take the chances. Take the prisoner, boys! (Several COWBOYS advance toward MORTON, who comes up C. and they surround him. SILVERA starts forward in anger.)

SILVERA (to COWBOYS). You shall not allow this robber to escape. I tell the judge—

PARKER (aiming revolver at SILVERA). You stand in your tracks, greaser, or I'll find your gizzard with a bullet!

RUTH (to Cowboys). Away with your prisoner to the Mexican line and ride like (spells word) h-e-l-l! (COWBOYS exeunt with MORTON C. D. RUTH stands up C., covering JONES with revolver. PARKER holds up SILVERA and CLARENCE and HOPKINS shake hands lustily up L. C. as—)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE: Same as Acts I and II, three weeks later. Stage well illuminated. At rise discovered LUCY at table reading a book and MRS. OGDEN about place, tidying up.

LUCY (puts book down with a sigh). No sign of Clarence nor Ruth yet, Mrs. Ogden?

MRS. OGDEN (going to window C. and looking off R.).

Nothing, as far as I see. They ought to be heaving into sight soon now.

LUCY. That was a very brave thing for Clarence and Ruth to do, to take Morton from the sheriff and send him into Mexico to escape trial.

MRS. OGDEN (*coming to table*). Clarence is a brave boy and Ruth—well, there's only one girl like her in Arizona.

LUCY. Both are deserving of the greatest credit for their exploit. You ought to be proud of Clarence, Mrs. Ogden.

MRS. OGDEN. I am proud of him, Lucy. He's so much like his poor father, whose been dead and gone these twelve years. (*Sighs.*)

LUCY. Indeed! How came you to lose him?

MRS. OGDEN. It was a puzzling case, to be sure, Lucy. You see, he was inordinately fond of lemon pies.

LUCY (*smilingly*). As fond of them as papa is of custard pies?

MRS. OGDEN. The two were alike in this regard, Lucy. All great men love pie. George Washington could eat three at a sitting and never have a cramp. Daniel Webster ate a cherry pie at every meal when in season and Abraham Lincoln, why, bless my soul, he thought as much of a mince pie as he did of Old Glory!

LUCY. Well, what had your husband's fondness for pie to do with his death?

MRS. OGDEN. I have always maintained it had nothing to do with it, but I merely mention the matter because of the coincidence connected with it.

LUCY (*puzzled*). Coincidence?

MRS. OGDEN. I expected some visitors from the East—we lived at Santa Fe then—and I made six lemon pies. What does my poor Henry do but eat two of them for supper. That night he took sick and died before morning. (*Sighs heavily.*)

LUCY. It must have been the pies—

MRS. OGDEN (*interrupting*). No, Lucy. It was indigestion!

LUCY (*smilingly*). I don't wonder at it.

MRS. OGDEN. My poor Henry suffered all his life from

fever and ague. He used to shake fearfully. He was a good man and I know he's in a place where chills are unknown.

LUCY (*putting her book upon table with determined look*). I shall see to it that Clarence does not follow in his footsteps, for he'll get no lemon pies from me!

Enter WHITE BIRD R. U. E., chanting an Indian song. It must be solemn. She walks back and forth up stage chanting and bowing her head repeatedly as she walks.

MRS. OGDEN (*surprised as she watches WHITE BIRD*). Whatever ails the girl?

LUCY (*rising*). It is the Apache death and mourning chant. (*Goes to WHITE BIRD up C.*) What has happened, White Bird?

WHITE BIRD. Black Panther dead—gone to happy hunting grounds.

LUCY (*starts*). Dead! When?

WHITE BIRD. An hour ago. Him shot in back yesterday.

LUCY. Good gracious! Who shot him in the back, White Bird?

WHITE BIRD (*shakes head in the negative*). Tell bimeby when Misce Allington come back. (*Squats down near window and sways her body backward and forward.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*up C.*). I always thought Black Panther would come to a bad end. Shot in the back? Who could have done it?

LUCY. We must learn her secret, but I fear she will not speak until Ruth returns. (*To WHITE BIRD.*) What did Panther say that might be of interest to Miss Arlington?

WHITE BIRD (*still swaying body*). Heap much—make her glad—no talkee now—no powwow. (*Sways disconsolately.*)

Enter HOPKINS R. U. E., holding a field glass in his hand. He comes to others C. His manner is excited.

HOPKINS (*to MRS. OGDEN*). I think they are coming, Mary. Have a peek, Lucy. (*Offers glass to LUCY.*)

MRS. OGDEN. I hope they are coming, Mr. Hopkins. (*Looks over LUCY's shoulder.*)

LUCY (*looking off R. with glasses*). It is they—it is they! There's Ruth and Morton riding in front and three men are following close behind. (*Exhibits great excitement.*)

MRS. OGDEN. Don't you see Clarence? Let me have the glasses, Lucy. (*Takes glasses from LUCY and looks off R.*) It is Clarence! I see him plainly now as he rides down the butte.

LUCY (*excitedly takes glasses from MRS. OGDEN*). Oh, let me see Clarence! (*Looks off L.*) Yes, it is Clarence. I must go to meet them, papa. (*Exits excitedly R. U. E.*)

WHITE BIRD (*rising and going to R. U. E.*). Must tell Misce Allington eberyting—make her glad. (*Exit R. U. E.*)

HOPKINS (*to MRS. OGDEN up C.*). That boy of yours is a jewel, Mrs. Ogden, and a lad after my own heart.

MRS. OGDEN. Thank you, Mr. Hopkins. He's been a dutiful son and a good son makes a good husband. He will be a fine husband to your daughter, Lucy.

HOPKINS. Of course he will, Mrs. Ogden. If I hadn't thought so, I never would have consented to his betrothal to my daughter.

MRS. OGDEN (*going to L. U. E.*). I'm glad you made no objection after you found out they were engaged. Excuse me, Mr. Hopkins, I'll have to prepare for the visitors.

HOPKINS (*at C.*). Don't be in a hurry, Mrs. Ogden. I've an important matter to discuss with you before they arrive.

MRS. OGDEN (*coming to HOPKINS at C.*). What is it, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. Are we to have any custard pies today?

MRS. OGDEN. Yes. How you do love custard pies.

HOPKINS. My dear madam, I adore every atom of those you make. You have reached my heart through my stomach, madam, and any woman that can do that with Samuel Hopkins, is worthy of his adoration.

MRS. OGDEN (*confused*). Oh, Mr. Hopkins!

HOPKINS. Why shouldn't you and I come to an agreement, Mrs. Ogden?

MRS. OGDEN. Agreement?

HOPKINS (*bravely at C.*). Well, it's this way. I—you—if we—hang it, this is more serious than I thought it would prove to be. Let us sit down. (*Gets a chair and drags it to C.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*alarmed*). You are not ill, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. No, but I've not got the same nerve I had twenty-five years ago. My underpinning is not what it was then. (*Gets another chair and places it beside the other at C., then motions to one at L.*) Won't you sit down, Mrs. Ogden?

MRS. OGDEN (*shyly sits in chair L.*). You quite surprise me, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS. This is only a starter, Mrs. Ogden. You see, my boy is going to marry your girl—

MRS. OGDEN (*laughingly*). I never had a daughter, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS. Bless my soul! I'm mixed—my tongue's rattled. My girl is going to marry your boy. (*Steals his arm about her waist.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*squirming*). Oh, Mr. Hopkins!

HOPKINS (*drawing her to him*). I never was accused of being selfish, but I don't believe in them getting a corner upon the matrimonial market. After thinking of those custard pies of yours and your beauty—

MRS. OGDEN (*interrupting*). Oh, you flatterer!

HOPKINS. Forgive my fibbing about your beauty—beg pardon, I wasn't fibbing! It is the truth, you're the handsomest widow in Arizona, and there isn't much grass here neither.

MRS. OGDEN (*aside*). Something's coming—I feel it!

HOPKINS. I'm worth a dozen dead ones, Mrs. Ogden. I got that Santa Bita land at my price and I cleaned up a cool \$23,000. I'm afraid I'm too old a bird to be trusted with so much money, and I'm going to take you into partnership with me, provided you agree to be the silent partner.

MRS. OGDEN. Your silent partner, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. I know it's asking a great deal of a woman, especially a widow, to agree to a silent partnership, but if you want to make a sort of family matter of this, I'm your

huckleberry, Mary. (*Draws her to him and caresses her.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*nestling to him*). I'm a poor widow, Mr. Hopkins—

HOPKINS (*interrupting*). I'm a rich widower and that evens up scores. If you and I marry, we all go East, open a pie factory and we'll retire millionaires. I'll furnish the capital, you the pies. Is it a bargain?

MRS. OGDEN (*putting her head on his shoulder*). Is this a proposal, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. Don't call me Mr. Hopkins! Call me Sammy.

MRS. OGDEN (*hugging him*). Oh, Sammy, dear!

HOPKINS (*as he hugs her*). Sammy! How sweet that sounds! It's real poetry—rhymes with damme! I'm your Sammy, you're my—damme! It doesn't sound just right that way!

Enter LUCY R. U. E., running. *She sees them at C., starts, stops and watches them in amazement.*

MRS. OGDEN (*hugging him with a gratified cry*). I'm yours, Sammy!

LUCY (*coming down to them—protestingly*). Oh, papa!

HOPKINS (*springing up in alarm*). Damme, stung!

MRS. OGDEN (*confused, stands L. C.*). We were joking, Lucy.

HOPKINS. Not much, Mary. This is no joke. (*Takes her hand and drawing her forward to Lucy at C.*) Be brave, Mary.

LUCY. You astonish me, papa. What sort of game were you playing just now?

HOPKINS. Cupid's whirligig, Lucy. You know all about it, you know. You take the son, I the mother.

LUCY (*astonished*). You don't mean—?

HOPKINS (*presenting Mrs. Ogden*). Yes, I mean to introduce you to your future mamma, Lucy.

LUCY (*amazed*). My mamma! (*Looks from one to the other bewildered.*)

HOPKINS. You may thank her custard pies for this hour of pleasure, my child. Now let the future Mrs. Ogden kiss the future Mrs. Hopkins.

LUCY (*laughingly*). Well, this is a surprise indeed! (*Goes to MRS. OGDEN L. C. with extended hand.*) I congratulate you upon your conquest with all my heart, Mrs. Ogden. (*Kisses her.*)

MRS. OGDEN. I give you my son, you give me your father. It is a fair exchange, Lucy.

(*Hoofbeats off R. U. E.*)

HOPKINS. Oh, you two will get along like two bugs in a rug!

LUCY (*putting an arm about HOPKINS*). I'll vouch for *papa*. He's the best and dearest daddy in the world!

HOPKINS (*kisses LUCY*). Stop your kidding, Lucy. (*Stops and scratches his head.*) By gosh, I never thought of it before!

LUCY and MRS. OGDEN (*together*). Of what?

HOPKINS. Will Clarence object to our marriage?

MRS. OGDEN (*putting her arms akimbo and looking severe*). I'd like to see him object! He won't relish a spanking—

LUCY (*laughingly interrupting*). Leave him to me, Mrs. Ogden. (*Hoofbeats and shouting off R. U. E. grow louder and there are cries of "Whoa!"*)

Enter CLARENCE *R. U. E. hastily, stands and watches others up stage.*

HOPKINS (*admiringly to MRS. OGDEN*). You'll make it hot for Clarence if he objects, I see.

MRS. OGDEN. Let him attend to his own love affair and I will attend to mine.

CLARENCE (*coming down C.*). Hello, mother, here we are!

MRS. OGDEN (*embracing CLARENCE*). My boy!

CLARENCE (*to LUCY as he embraces her*). You're lovelier than ever, Lucy. (*Shakes hands with HOPKINS.*) Glad to see you, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS (*shaking hands*). We're the happiest bunch in Arizona, boy.

CLARENCE. What was this I heard mother say about a love affair just now. (*Looks inquiringly at MRS. OGDEN.*)

MRS. OGDEN (*shyly*). Well, Clarence, Cupid has made a prisoner of me.

CLARENCE. Cupid! (*Looks about.*) I don't see any Cupid. HOPKINS (*strutting across stage*). I'm that little bird, Clarence! (*Points to MRS. OGDEN.*) I with my little arrow, she with her pies, settled the business for both of us.

Enter RUTH and MORTON, R. U. E. They stand up stage for a moment, listen, then come down C. gradually.

MRS. OGDEN. It's true, Clarence. Our hearts are pinned together for life.

CLARENCE (*amazed—to LUCY*). I can't make it out, Lucy.

LUCY (*laughingly*). They've followed our example and are engaged to be married.

CLARENCE (*surprised*). Married? Your father marry my mother? Pinch me, Lucy, I must be dreaming.

HOPKINS. It's no pipe dream, Clarence. We're engaged.

RUTH (*coming down C.*). I sincerely congratulate you both.

MORTON. And I. (*Shakes HOPKINS' hand.*)

MRS. OGDEN. I thank you for your good wishes. You must be hungry, so I'll have luncheon for you in a jiffy. (*Goes to L. U. E.*)

HOPKINS (*to MRS. OGDEN*). Don't forget that pie to seal our bargain.

MRS. OGDEN. I wont, Sammy. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

RUTH (*at table R. C.*). When is the wedding to be solemnized, Mr. Hopkins?

HOPKINS. When Lucy and Clarence are married. We'll make it a double wedding. Besides, it wont cost as much for the services of the parson who can join both couples the same trip. (*All laugh. Going to L. U. E.*) I'll have to lend Mary a helping hand with the luncheon. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

CLARENCE (*aside to LUCY, pointing to RUTH and MORTON conferring at table*). This place is too thickly popu-

lated for us. Let us go to the corral where we can talk it over without witnesses.

LUCY. I think it would be more comfortable. (*Goes up C. with CLARENCE. MORTON beckons CLARENCE aside.*)

MORTON (*to CLARENCE*). Going to leave us for awhile, Clarence?

CLARENCE. Yes, we are going to have a council of war.

MORTON. Take your time, old chap. Don't hurry back.

CLARENCE (*laughingly as he looks at RUTH*). I wont, Morton. Come along, Lucy. (*Exeunt R. U. E. with Lucy.*)

MORTON (*going to RUTH C.*). Alone at last, Ruth! If you only knew how I have longed for this hour!

RUTH (*sitting R. of table R. C.*). Come, tell me what happened after your—your abduction from Tombstone. Please be seated.

MORTON (*sitting R. at table*). There is not much to tell, Ruth. We rode to the Mexican line and sought refuge in the Sierra Madre Mountains. We camped, hunted and watched for the pursuers we expected, but who failed to appear.

RUTH (*laughingly*). There was no pursuit, Harold. — Sheriff Jones was mad as a hornet, though, and sought to raise a posse, but the cowboys who were left refused to be sworn in as deputies.

MORTON. Brave, whole-souled fellows!

RUTH. He reported the matter to the judge and if Parker and I hadn't been well on our way to Tucson by the time he awoke, we might have been arrested for aiding a prisoner to escape.

MORTON. It was a courageous act, Ruth. But, for your bravery I must have been convicted.

RUTH. Any girl would do as much for the man she loved. You met the scout we sent?

MORTON. Yes. We had been watching for two weeks when he appeared and told us of your success in finding Wingfield. How happy the news made me! We at once returned to Tombstone, where you were awaiting me. How did you find him?

RUTH. It was Parker. He proved a valuable friend,

Harold, and we owe him much. When we got to Tucson we learned that Wingfield had gone to Flagstaff. We went there, found him and brought him to Tombstone, where he signed an affidavit absolving you from guilt. When the judge returned a week later, and heard Wingfield's story, he dismissed the charge against you.

MORTON. Did Silvera offer any objection?

RUTH. The judge said he was guilty of perjury and issued a bench warrant for his arrest, but Silvera had flown, no one knows whither.

MORTON. I hope never to see his hateful face again! I have been cleared in your sight of one of his charges; but there remains another, and it, too, must be answered!

RUTH. Think of it no more, Harold. I do not believe it. Let that suffice for your peace of mind.

MORTON (*rising and walking up and down C. excitedly*). I must solve the mystery at any cost. Silvera knows who killed your father and I must force the secret from him!

RUTH (*rising and going to MORTON C.*). Heaven will solve the mystery in its own time, Harold.

Enter WHITE BIRD, R. U. E. She comes down C. slowly.

MORTON (*at C., taking her hand*). I pray I may be its instrument.

WHITE BIRD (*to RUTH*). White Bird want powwow with Misce Allington.

RUTH (*surprised*). Powow with me, White Bird? What is it?

WHITE BIRD (*pointing to MORTON*). White chief stay and hear too?

RUTH. You may speak freely before him. He is my friend.

WHITE BIRD. Him heap good pale face—good man, brave warrior, him fader no kill you fader, Misce Allington.

RUTH (*in surprise*). What do you mean, White Bird?

MORTON. Does the girl know anything about the affair?
(*He stands to L. and RUTH to R. of WHITE BIRD at C.*)

WHITE BIRD. Black Panther shot in back—him dead now.

RUTH and MORTON (*starting*). Black Panther dead!

WHITE BIRD (*nodding her head*). Him gone to happy hunting grounds—him tell me heap for Misce Allington and paleface chief.

RUTH (*eagerly*). Yes, yes—go on!

WHITE BIRD. Him sing death song, then say him see Silvera shoot you fader in back six summers ago.

RUTH (*swaying*). Merciful heavens!

MORTON (*catching her about waist*). Light in the darkness at last, my love! (*To WHITE BIRD.*) Do you speak the truth, White Bird? Our happiness depends upon what you say!

WHITE BIRD (*proudly*). White Bird no have double tongue—speak true. (*Goes up C. to window and looks off L.*)

RUTH (*goes up stage after and brings her down*). I know it, White Bird. You never yet spoke falsely to me.

WHITE BIRD. And nebber will, Misce Allington. (*After pause.*) Panther swear Silvera and you fader have quarrel on mesa and Mexican swear by Great Spirit him get revenge. One day strange paleface come here to see you fader—

MORTON (*interrupting*). It was my father!

WHITE BIRD. They go out on mesa togedder. Panther follow dem, soon see Silvera wid rifle. Silvera trail you two faders, Panther trail Silvera. (*Pauses.*)

MORTON (*angrily*). The black-hearted scoundrel!

RUTH (*to MORTON*). The mystery is being solved! (*To WHITE BIRD.*) What happened then, White Bird?

WHITE BIRD. Panther see you fader and paleface pow-wow over paper long time. Dey talk mad like, den stranger go 'way. You fader den put him paper in him pocket and go 'way, too, alone. Silvera follow Mr. Allington.

MORTON. This is true; my heart tells me so!

WHITE BIRD. When you fader get to butte dere (*points R. U. E.*) Silvera get down on one knee so (*kneels on one knee*), take aim so (*business*), den shoot and run away. You fader fall dead and Panther him 'fraid and run 'way for long time.

RUTH (*tearfully*). Foul murder—base assassin!

WHITE BIRD. Silvera turn you fader over, take papers and run 'way. Panther him 'fraid and run 'way too for long time.

RUTH. Why in God's name did he not tell all this before?

WHITE BIRD. Him 'fraid of Silvera—him bad Apache to tribe, but good to me. He my fader's brother. Silvera find out Panther know 'bout murder, 'cause Panther git drunk and tell friend of Silvera. Den Silvera come here and shoot Panther in back three miles 'way yesterday.

MORTON. How do you know it was Silvera?

WHITE BIRD. Panther see him too late. Him crawl to tepee and die two hours ago. I have said it. (*Turns proudly up C. to window.*)

RUTH (*to Morton*). It must be true—Silvera is hereabouts and we must guard ourselves, for he means us no good.

MORTON (*at table R. C.*). You are right, Ruth. If I catch sight of him, I warrant you will have little cause to fear him.

Enter HOPKINS L. U. E., followed by MRS. OGDEN.

HOPKINS (*coming C. excitedly*). We've settled matters, Ruth. We're going to get married a week from today.

MRS. OGDEN. It's true, Ruth. We've come to an agreement.

RUTH (*surprised*). Agreement, Mrs. Ogden?

MRS. OGDEN. Sammy insisted I should be the silent partner, but the dear man yielded to my arguments and gave up the idea.

HOPKINS. I just had too. If any man makes a woman his silent partner for life, she'll never tire of talking about the injustice of it.

Enter CLARENCE and LUCY R. U. E.

RUTH (*laughingly*). I wish you all the happiness in the world!

HOPKINS (*conferring with Mrs. Ogden L. C.*). Thanks, Ruth.

CLARENCE (*coming down C.*). The sheriff and Jim Parker are coming.

RUTH. I'm glad of it. We need their help.

CLARENCE. Why, what's happened now?

RUTH. Silvera's prying about the ranch and he may murder us as he did my father and Panther.

CLARENCE. Killed your father!

Enter JONES and PARKER R. U. E.

RUTH. We have learned the truth. Harold's father is innocent.

HOPKINS (*going to MORTON up C. and taking his hand*). I congratulate you, my boy. I knew it all the time.

MORTON. Thank you, Mr. Hopkins. (*To JONES*.) How are you, Sheriff?

JONES. Finer'n silk, Morton.

MORTON (*shakes hands with PARKER*). And how are you, Jim?

PARKER. Never was better, pard. I see you got home all right.

MORTON. Yes, thanks to you. I owe you my life, Jim.

PARKER. No, you don't, Morton. You saved my pard, and it's just natural that I'll back you to my last chip!

JONES (*at C. to others*). We've got evidence that Silvera is hidin' up this way and me and Jim has come up to nail him.

(*SILVERA appears at window C. and listens unobserved*.)

PARKER. I have the honor to inform you all that I've quit shoving the pasteboards and I'm Bill's deputy.

RUTH. Bill ought to feel proud of his new deputy.

JONES. You bet I am. They don't make men any better than Jim Parker.

HOPKINS (*L. C.*). Nor pies better than Mrs. Ogden's.

MRS. OGDEN. You're so complimentary, Sammy. (*Confers with HOPKINS*.)

JONES. Silvera, I'm told, has a certain document of value to Miss Arlington, a deed to a rich mine which belonged to Mr. Arlington.

RUTH. Silvera first killed, then robbed my poor father.

JONES. How ye got onto that I don't know. Me and Jim got a confession of one of Silvera's pards who was adyin'

from a knife wound in the side. He says Silvera admitted to him that he killed your father, Miss Arlington, and that that ole Apache buck Panther up yar witnessed the deed.

WHITE BIRD (*goes to JONES C.*). He speak true—Silvera kill Mr. Arlington, den shoot Panther in back yesterday.

JONES. Whew! Aint he bloodthirsty?

WHITE BIRD. You kill Silvera if you ketch him?

JONES. If he gives me a chance to draw bead on him, he'll go to hell 'thout knowing what route he took.

(SILVERA *shakes fist at JONES and disappears from window C.*)

WHITE BIRD. It is good. (*Goes to R. U. E. and exits.*)

RUTH (*to JONES*). What is your plan, Mr. Jones.

JONES. We have come to git your advice. Mine aint flowin' jist right. Guess it's because I'm under a roof. (*Goes to R. U. E.*) We'd better go to the corral and talk it over.

PARKER (*going to R. U. E.*). That's a good plan. We'll have a palaver, shuffle the cards of our ideas straight, give each man a draw and the best man wins.

JONES. And how about Silvera?

PARKER. We'll throw his hand in the discard and check his game for good and aye.

MORTON. We must rouse the country against this wretch. Will you join us, Mr. Hopkins? You, too, Clarence?

CLARENCE. I'm with you if Lucy doesn't object.

LUCY. No objection. Go. (*Turns to RUTH R. C.*)

HOPKINS. I'm no free agent any more. (*To MRS. OGDEN, humbly.*) May I go with them, Mary?

MRS. OGDEN. If you kill that snake, Sammy, I'll become the silent partner.

HOPKINS. It's a bargain! Give us a custard pie apiece, Mary, and I'll guarantee we'll get away with an army of Silveras.

JONES. You don't get me to eat no pies, when I'm on a job like this.

PARKER. I'd sooner take my chances with a cold deck.

CLARENCE. Make it a cold chicken for me. (*Exeunt with JONES, PARKER, MORTON and HOPKINS, R. U. E.*)

RUTH (*joyously to Lucy at C.*). I am the happiest woman in Arizona, Lucy! Harold's name has been cleared of the stains cast upon it by Silvera and there is no bar to our marriage now!

LUCY. I am indeed happy at your good fortune, Ruth. As for me, I never did believe Silvera's odious charges.

MRS. OGDEN. Nor did I. (*Goes to L. U. E.*) I'll have to look after the supper now. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

Enter SILVERA, revolver in hand R. U. E. He stands at door and looks off, then closes it.

LUCY. The very thought of Silvera turns my blood cold. Suppose he were to come here, Ruth?

RUTH (*embraces Lucy*). Have no fear, Lucy. He will not dare to enter this house.

SILVERA (*coming down C. and presents revolver at RUTH and Lucy*). You think so, eh?

RUTH and LUCY (*starting in fear*). Silvera!

SILVERA (*fiercely*). Utter a sound above a whisper, and I will kill you both!

LUCY (*clinging to RUTH*). He will murder us!

RUTH. Have no fear. He will not harm us. What do you want, Silvera?

SILVERA. Revenge!

RUTH. Revenge? Upon whom, pray?

SILVERA. Your lover, Morton.

RUTH. Have you not harmed him enough? Did not you accuse his father of the crime of killing mine, when you yourself were the assassin?

SILVERA (*starts*). How did you learn that? (*Laughs.*) Well, no matter. I am going to kill Morton, first, because he loves you, second, because he struck me!

RUTH. Unhappy man! I never gave you cause to love me. Why kill the man I loved long before I saw your hateful face?

SILVERA. Because he dared to cross my path, that's why! I hate him! I have declared vendetta against him! He shall die! When I kill him, I break your heart and I will see you suffer! Thus will your cruel words to me be punished!

RUTH. Monster! I shall call for help!

LUCY (*seeks to restrain RUTH*). Don't, Ruth! He will kill us!

SILVERA. You shall not leave this place until I give the word. I shall fool those fellows yonder yet!

Enter MRS. OGDEN, L. U. E. She sees SILVERA, turns in fright and exits after making a significant sign to RUTH.

SILVERA (*turns to L. U. E.*). What was that noise? (*Listens at L. U. E., then returns to RUTH and LUCY, R. C.*)

RUTH. It was nothing. (*Aside to LUCY.*) Mrs. Ogden will give the alarm. Let us be silent.

LUCY. If he knew he would shoot us both!

SILVERA (*at R. U. E.*). Morton is coming! I shall shoot him down at your feet and then I care not what becomes of me! But I will escape to Mexico where I can laugh at these dogs. (*Stands with drawn revolver at R. U. E.*)

RUTH (*Goes up stage*). Would you murder an unarmed, unsuspecting man?

Enter JONES L. U. E., with drawn revolver.

SILVERA (*Sees JONES, grasps RUTH and holds her in front of him. He backs off R. U. E.*) You shall see him die, Miss Arlington!

JONES (*aiming at SILVERA*). Hands up, Silvera!

SILVERA (*as he holds RUTH before him*). Shoot, Jones, shoot!

JONES (*advancing to R. U. E.*). Ye'd better give in, Silvera. The house is surrounded. Ye kaint git away.

SILVERA (*throwing RUTH from him*). Bah, I'll escape you yet. (*Exit R. U. E.*)

JONES (*runs to R. U. E. and fires*). I regret to say that ye tried that game once too often, Silvera. (*Exit R. U. E. and immediately fires shot.*)

Enter immediately, L. U. E., PARKER, followed by MORTON, CLARENCE and HOPKINS. Enter MRS. OGDEN, L. U. E. HOPKINS goes to her and they confer L. C. RUTH staggers to C., followed by MORTON, who stands sustaining her. CLARENCE and LUCY stand L. C.

PARKER (*looking off R. U. E.*). Bill's kept his word, the greaser drawed one too many card that time and he's cashed in. (*Takes hat off reverently.*) I hope the Great Gamekeeper above aint been badly cheated!

Enter JONES, R. U. E. He puts revolver back in holster and carries a document in his hand. He comes down C.

MORTON. Is he dead, Jim?

JONES. He's buzzard's meat now, folks. He's turned up his toes for fair.

RUTH. Silvera dead!

JONES. He whispered to me that he killed yer father, Miss Arlington, and said his only regret was he couldn't send Morton after him. Then he gave up this deed to a mine in the Mogollon range, which, I think, Miss, makes ye the richest gal in Arizona. (*Offers paper.*)

RUTH (*taking paper*). It needed not this deed to make me the richest girl in Arizona, for I have Mr. Morton.

MORTON. You are indeed a brave-hearted daughter of the desert. (*MORTON and RUTH stand embraced C., HOPKINS and MRS. OGDEN stand L. C., CLARENCE and LUCY, R. C., and JONES and PARKER up stage near window as—*)

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SYNOPSIS.

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Act II.—The troubles of Biddy. The bank cashier at business. Ikey wins his point. The unsuspecting miner. The trap. Paul tries to save him. The murder. Father and daughter. "The receipt or I'll choke you."

Act III., Scene I.—The loving partners. Both on the same case. The law firm splits up. Scene II.—Blinkey bids Lucy "Good-bye." The warning and offer of protection. Paul again to the rescue. The enemies at bay.

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SYNOPSIS.

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Act II.—"The Indians are coming." A scared Chinaman. "Savee Hop Sing's pigtail." Rose offers to give herself up to Spotted Face to save the palefaces. The avowal of love. "We will fight and die together." The rescue.

Act III.—A message from the President. The wire is cut. "This is the work of Carleton." "The testimony is perjured and the documents are forgeries." "I believe you innocent." "You are to be shot at sunrise." Beryl to the rescue. Beryl at the telegraph key. The reprieve.

Act IV.—A scout's experience with a Chinaman. "I love ye, Rose." "We talk to parson." Saved by an accident. "We will surprise mamma and papa." Hop Sing goes on strike. Carleton in disguise returns. "I will kill you and have my revenge." Rose shoots Carleton. The reunion. "It is God's way."

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SYNOPSIS.

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Act II.—Law office in Chicago. The Major learns something.

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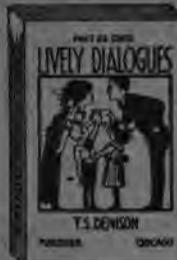
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